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MEMOIR

OF

COLONEL WHEELER:

(AFTERWARDS MAJOR-GENERAL) E.I.C.S.

BY

MAJOR H. M. CONRAN,

LATE BENGAL ARTILLERY.

WITH PREFACE BY MACLEOD WYLIE, ESQ.

"An example of the believers."—1 Tim. iv. 12.

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PREFACE.

I HAVE had the privilege of reading, in proof, the Memoir of that beloved and honoured saint, the late General Wheler of the Bengal Army. My dear friend, the author, Major Conran, his old and true yoke-fellow, has allowed me this great pleasure. May I, can I, reply with a complaint? Yes; for one moment, ere I pass on, I will pause to say, that I do not coincide in all that is written; and, especially, I believe that Lord Canning, Colonel Stuart, his military secretary, and Sir Richard Birch, the military secretary to the Government, felt no unkindness to Stephen Wheler, and were not carried away by the clamour about his preaching to the Sepoys in 1857; also I believe that very much has

been done by the Government to improve the condition of the soldiery. But having said that, with what joy can I welcome a book which in so small compass, in a tone so well suited to the British soldiery, tells the tale of that most faithful, humble-hearted man, who, above all other men in India, whether in the army or out of it, served the Lord in labours above measure!

It is true that too many memoirs have been published; it is true that in many memoirs there is mingled with some gold much dross; and perhaps, as the result, many people wish to hear no more of works in which the lives and thoughts of imperfect men are recorded. Yet it is also true, that the Church of Christ does need, and will profit largely by, other memoirs still, if only there be enough that is really distinctive, really edifying, really heart-affecting, in their pages. And surely no one who knows the facts of this case, will deny that General Wheler's life afforded ample materials for such a memoir. He went out to India fifty

years ago as a mere boy, and at that time there was scarcely a Christian officer, in the true sense of the term, to be found in the country. One good man, a Captain Page, whose son is now a Baptist missionary, had yielded his heart to the Lord, and good old Mr. Leslie, who still survives, when he preached his funeral sermon took for his text, "Ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia." In Southern India there was Colonel Munro, and probably a few like him.

But almost universally there was gross darkness among the people, native and European. Some glimmerings of light had broken in upon the poor soldiery, through the labours of the missionary Chamberlain in Bengal, and the missionary Hands in Madras, and the chaplains Henry Martyn and Corrie. The Serampore Mission had added to its ranks converted soldiers, men of rare faith and simple piety: Arratoon, who was a private soldier at Seringapatam; Leonard of Dacca, who was converted through the reading of

the Scriptures when in solitary confinement; Mackintosh of Allahabad, Smith of Benares, Smylie, and others, who all fulfilled their course and died in faith, after many years of faithful service. Bowley of the Church Mission, who gave the Church in India an excellent translation of the Bible in Hindi, was also in the ranks—a poor half-caste, nominally Christian, drummer, converted through the preaching of the beloved Corrie. And here and there in various stations were small gatherings of private soldiers, who met to edify one another, when few if any others cared for their souls. I remember seeing in the hands of an old Christian whom the Lord had prospered, a copy of his "Church Covenant," which he had signed when in the Dragoons, and a truly simple and touching memorial it was, of the piety of a poor despised remnant in a dark and evil day.

Stephen Wheler's conversion occurred at Saugor, in Central India, in 1829. Not long after he lost, by the failure of his agents, all the savings of his twelve years' service, and

from that time he resolved to save no more. Major Conran's Memoir traces his future course till he fell asleep in 1865, having fought a good fight and kept the faith, yea, having been a burning and shining light, and having, with few intermissions, during thirty years, preached the gospel to the poor. He never married; never with advancing rank and income increased his expenditure on himself; but counting himself alive from the dead, and his members as instruments of righteousness unto God, he gave up all that he had and all that he was, without one reservation, to his service. To deal out his bread to the hungry, to preach as dying unto dying men, and to walk with God,—were the aim and happiness of his life. In the great famine of 1837-8, he laboured to save the starving natives, and laid the foundation of the missionary orphanage at Futtyghur. When, in 1859-60, there was another famine, he left his quiet home, and again went among the poor, collected orphans, and gave up to them the remaining years and powers of his life.

The interval was occupied by an unexampled and truly wonderful course of service. At Agra he preached to the soldiers and natives, and in his second residence there, his labours, with those of Mr. Norgate, were followed by a revival of an extraordinary character in H.M. 24th Regiment. At Peshawur, when the British troops took possession of it as the frontier station, he went forth into the streets, amidst swarms of wild fanatical Afghans, and preached the gospel. In every station whither his regiment was ordered, he in the same manner preached Jesus.

If Wheler, whether as captain, major, or afterwards colonel, was stationed in a cantonment where there were British troops, no one need doubt that a soldier's chapel would be found there. And all his work was steady and continuous; not spasmodic and occasional. It was his meat and drink to do his Father's will, for he had the mind of Christ, and *delighted* to do His will. And with all and in all, there was a benignity, a true ten-

derness and humility, that distinguished him from nearly all other men; and so he laboured on like the apostle, "in watchings, in fastings, by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour or dishonour, by evil report and good report,.....as unknown yet well known,..... as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing and yet possessing all things." (2 Cor. vi.)

In this course there were, as may be supposed, many adversaries, and in 1857, when the first signs of the great Mutiny appeared, a great outcry was raised by the press in India and in England against Colonel Wheler, as the cause of all, by irritating the natives through his preaching. Major Conran says, I believe truly, that at no time did the Commander-in-chief interfere with him, and it was but little, after all, that the Supreme Government disturbed him. But in 1857 he

had to vindicate his preaching, and this he did in letters which this Memoir presents to us; letters, which will probably attain a celebrity which the writer little expected or desired. Such letters have seldom, if ever, before, been addressed to a Government by a military officer. They were written when there was nothing outwardly to encourage him. All men nearly spoke evil of him. The natives were rising to maintain their caste, and he was regarded as the great incendiary. But "faithful found among the faithless," he stood firm, and plainly said, as was said of yore: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." The wild hurricane of popular passion and the apparent anger of the Government moved him not, but he remained serene and calm as ever:

> "Like some tall rock that lifts its awful form,
> Swells from the vale and midway meets the storm,
> Though rolling clouds around its breast be spread,
> Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

Shall we say that he was perfect? We

cannot. We know that he was far from it. He was certainly defective in knowledge. Long as he had read, dearly as he loved the Bible, he had not very clear views of the gospel. At one time he was very much under the influence of two or three memoirs of devoted Methodists, (especially Mrs. Rogers and William Bramwell), and for some years was thirsting for that "gift of perfect love" which they were supposed to have obtained. The believer, in truth, is only holy as partaker of God's holiness; he never has inwrought in him a work on which he can rest. But this faithful man, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, panted for freedom from sin, and for some years was tossed about on a sea of conflict, and at no period does he appear to have had very full and consistent conceptions of the gospel of the grace of God.

Yet his case is deeply instructive and encouraging. No matter whether we trace his course before or after he conceived his theory of perfection, he was equally blessed

in his labours, equally honoured of the Lord, and equally beloved by his brethren. And why? Simply because, throughout, his eye was single, he gave himself without reserve and with all his powers to the service of his Master, he loved his Saviour with supreme love, and his brethren as himself, and his heart's desire for all men was that they might be saved. And in all this there is a very solemn and very touching lesson. We may learn that our success, the Lord's blessing on our labours, depends not on the theoretic accuracy of our theology, but much more on our simplicity of aim, our faith and prayers, our zeal for the Lord's glory, our patience, zeal, and perseverance.

We find in the Scriptures Apollos greatly helped and greatly blessed in his work, while yet he needed much the instruction which Aquila and Priscilla gave him. And many an evangelist there has been whose earliest days were his best days;—those earliest days when he had far more faith than knowledge. No one would think of quoting General

Wheler as a theologian; but oh, how many will be his crowns of rejoicing in "that day!" How many have passed away who first heard the word of truth from his lips! How many live still, who remember him as their best and holiest friend; and how many are there who, if they could, would have flown to his dying couch, and have cried, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!" Blessed be God, that differ as men may on some points of theology, confused as may be our views of some doctrines, there are many things which are clear to all who love the Saviour, and have known his grace; and if we, as this beloved friend, speak of these things, speak of the precious blood of Christ, the need of a change of heart, and the need and the blessedness of holiness, and live ourselves in the experience of the truths we speak, we may have the degree of no college, we may scarcely be able to subscribe to all that is required by any church, yet the gracious Lord will accept and bless the effort to serve Him, perhaps as fully as the efforts

of wiser and more learned men. "Out of the fulness of the *heart* the mouth speaketh."

Need I, after what I have said, add anything to recommend this book? It is adapted in a very special manner to the British army, and there will be hundreds upon hundreds who will read it. In India it will recall days that are passed, I trust for ever, and there it will tend to perpetuate the tradition of a saintly man, who knew nothing but Christ and Him crucified, and whose happiness was to help the poor. And in many other places the bright example here exhibited will animate the hearts of the Lord's people. But in India most of all will the work be prized. Many, many are the beloved saints who have there finished their days in faith and hope, conveying to their successors the patriarch's assurance, "Behold I die, but God shall be with you!" Oh, how many pious officers, how many unknown godly soldiers, how many faithful missionaries, have there been carried to the tomb, and mourned by survivors, who have breathed forth the cry, "By whom

shall Jacob arise, for he is small?" What multitudes of prayers, full of faith and fervour, have from that land risen up to heaven; pleading for the land, and pleading for the world!

Much of sin there has been in India; but blessed be God for the sure conviction that there has been also in India no common succession of devoted believers, who have claimed the country and people for their Master, and have been gathered there by Him as the first-fruits of his harvest. Those who have gone before bore the burden and heat of the day, and now, for one or two here and there, many may be found avouching the Lord to be their God; many Europeans, and many natives of various tribes. May these more recent believers be faithful and true; as faithful, as devoted, as self-denying, as those who have entered into rest, whose record is on high, of whom the world was not worthy! And may the memory of Stephen Wheler, little as he expected that men would ever in after days

think or write of *him*, kindle in many the prayerful desire to give up all for Christ, to reckon all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, and finally to aim at pursuing as consistent and as holy a course as his!

England now-a-days seems nearer to India than it was in former years. It is easy to "come home" now on sick leave, or the like. But if India is to be won, we want men who will make *it* their home; anchor their hopes *there*, and die there among their own people. It may be a wearisome and toilsome life; but oh, the end! Oh, the richness and fulness of that joy on earth with which a stranger cannot intermeddle; and the sweet and ecstatic crowning joy of the blessed Saviour's smile at last!

M. WYLIE.

PAU, *October* 30, 1866.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

Of late years, memoirs of several faithful and beloved brethren in the Army have appeared, by which the Lord has spoken to the hearts of many. Most of them were young men, and comparatively young believers. It seems meet that a voice should now be uttered to the Army, and to the Church of Christ at large (as from one who being dead yet speaketh), from the grave of a venerable saint, who for nearly fifty years was a servant of the Government in India, and there, for the greater part of that time, served with unusual devotion in the happy work of winning souls to the Redeemer.

The name of General Wheler, (much better

known, before his step of honorary rank, as Colonel Wheler,)* is dear to not a few in all ranks in the Bengal Army, and far beyond Bengal to the Lord's people scattered abroad. He sought no praise of men, and prepared no materials for a memoir; yet it would be strange if his memory were allowed to perish, and if future labourers in his Master's vineyard in India and elsewhere were allowed to live in ignorance of his example.

The subject of our memoir, in the theatre of his labours and the times in which he lived, was ahead of his age. He seemed typical of the Church that *is to be* amidst the glowing Orient, rather than a production of the past in the travailing Church of the West. Christianity until his day had only been known in India as a foreign importation, whether in missionaries from another land supported from without, or, as in [illegible] representatives, birds of passage [illegible] the country to make [illegible] nest and rear their

* As the name of Wheler is not uncommon in the army, we have thought it right, for the sake of identification, to adopt in the title of this book, the more familiar designation.

callow brood, and again depart without a tie of union or spark of interest in the land they left.

Carey, Marshman, and Ward, were the earliest champions of the independence of the Indian Church, and personally exemplified this truth to the last in their own lives. General Wheler, although in his earthly calling subservient to the ruling race and country, was amongst the first to re-assert the principle of the "Serampore brethren," and stamp on India the idea that Christianity should be an indigenous production and self-sustaining. He adopted as the principle of his evangelistic enterprise the maxim of Hannibal and Napoleon, "that an invading army should be supported from the conquered country," and considered that Christianity, being as much Asiatic as British, ought not to be exclusive, but cosmopolitan.

Though, perhaps, not so far advanced as some who, since his day, have gone forth independent of human systems or establishments, satisfied to get support either from

friends raised up of God, or preferring that their own hands should minister to their necessities, General Wheler prepared their way by making India the land of his adoption, and identifying himself with all its interests. Preaching the gospel to Europeans and natives alike, his professional connection with the latter reminded them that he "laboured working with his hands the thing which was good, that he might have to give to him that needed." Thus he enlisted all their sympathies, personal and national, appealing to all their feelings, temporal and spiritual. He preserved the heavenly message from all identification with party claims or systems, whether originating in historical conflicts or national peculiarities, and left on the minds of his hearers the impression that "the gospel that was preached of him was not after man, for that he neither received it from man, nor was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

General Wheler may likewise be regarded as the pioneer of that blessed movement

which is carrying "Revivals" throughout our own and other Christian lands. If not the most honourable of all, he headed that goodly array of lay preachers, who, recruited especially from officers and the ranks of the army, are proclaiming the gospel in every corner of the land. It was ever a foremost thought with him that every converted man in his sphere, and according to his gift, should herald forth the tidings of salvation. His own full faith in the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, enabled him to magnify the grace of God, and exalt His love to sinners, and His readiness to save to the uttermost all who come to Him through Jesus.

No lack of ecclesiastical commission or human aid, whether pecuniary or intellectual, discouraged him. Wherever he found man, whatever his race or condition, or however fallen and ignorant, he recognized the creature of God, and trusted to Divine agency for the regenerating power of the truth to triumph over flesh, world, or devil. Taking the Bible

as his marching orders, and delivered from all fear of man or confidence in an arm of flesh, his character became wondrously assimilated to the Scripture model. Sadly conscious of degeneracy in all that was human, compared with the fresh-struck mintage of gospel times, he was wont to ignore all human tradition, ancient or modern, and revert to the Fountain-head and smitten Rock. He sensitively shrunk from allowing his own personal characteristics to become the ideal of those by whom he was surrounded, and probably it was for this reason that he ever refused to be photographed. He deeply dreaded and denounced the man-worship and idolatry he saw invading the Church, and we must be pardoned some deficiencies in this Memoir, which arise from a reluctance to act in opposition to these feelings of his. We have felt occasionally restrained from invading the secrecy of his inner life, and have somewhat left his character in the obscurity he loved.

His pilgrim life in the army, whilst it has increased our difficulty in tracing certain

variations of his opinions, has enabled us to multiply testimonies and afford additional evidence to his character. He was a savour unto God in all places which he visited, and in them all left marks of his apostleship, commending himself to every man in the sight of God.

Here we leave our task. May the Lord accept and bless it! Imperfect it is, with no pretension to the wisdom of words or skilful literary arrangement, but the gracious Spirit can render it effectual for His saving work, to the praise of the glory of the Triune God. To His blessing it is now committed, in humble prayer that He will, through it, honour the memory of His faithful servant, and exalt His own grace in the salvation and comfort of souls. Amen.

H. M. CONRAN.

ELGIN, *November*, 1866.

MEMOIR

OF

MAJOR-GENERAL S. G. WHELER.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE condition of British India at the period when General Wheler commenced his Christian course, forms an important element in the elucidation of his character and the right appreciation of his conduct. In every age those men of God who have been called forth to special service for his name, have been found possessed of some marked characteristics which peculiarly fitted them for their labours; and it is only in harmony with the ways of the Divine Master that the pioneer of truth in the native army, he who was honoured to "prepare the way of the Lord" in the Upper Provinces of India, should have been specially adapted for that work.

Our few and scattered countrymen in these regions were as yet, though conquerors of the

country, themselves in bondage to heathen vices which prevailed almost universally in all the power and prestige of the most ancient idolatry the world contains. The provinces north-east and west of Calcutta were under the entire control of our "prætorian" Sepoys, whose European officers, eager for the excitement of active service, and inflated by the continual conquests which were adding noble countries to our empire in the East, became, from the moment of entering the service, identified with the spirit and interests of the Sepoys, who, with a due appreciation of the martial qualities of their leaders, and a firm belief in the "hikmat" (luck) of the "Companie Sirkar," politely yielded to a kind of compromise, by which Sunday could be observed as a holiday when they were not on line of march, or engaged in other pressing employments. At some stations, where a chaplain (rarely of the Henry Martyn type) was located, a few of our countrymen would attend a weekly service, which, with occasional marriages and baptisms, constituted the observances of the visible church in the Bengal Presidency beyond Calcutta.

It is impossible, without shocking the better feelings of our common nature, to delineate the truly heathenish and degrading profligacy which prevailed; but enough must be known to enable

us to judge of the extremely trying position in which the subject of our memoir was placed.

Officers' houses in those days always had a "zenana" compound.* Alliances with native women, although unsanctioned by marriage, were held quite honourable. It is to be feared that a still worse course is pursued amongst the European soldiers in India in our day. Nor can it be remedied as long as the Government, notwithstanding the most lavish expenditure for their physical welfare, retains amongst the regulations for their European army, that of "forbidding to marry."† The only scandal ever occasioned by our countrymen's connection with native women was, when some one's conscience had been awakened, and he saw fit to prefer an honourable marriage with a native female to an illicit union: a general combination would often be made to exclude such an offender from society.

If the domestic life of Britons was so questionable, equally disgraceful was their connection with the idolatrous customs of the native army. From the familiar [illegible] to Brahmins and

* Female apartment.

† See the "Military Cant[illegible] Bill" [illegible] inspecting and controlling [illegible] and [illegible]. Only ten per cent. in [illegible]

Mohammedans having been the favourite element for recruiting, the native regiments at the time of the Mutiny had become the very schools of the false prophets; and under the patronage and influence of their nominally Christian officers, their saturnalia at the annual idolatrous festivals, continuing a month each, became a nuisance even to many of the native inhabitants. Government property of all kinds—tents, guns, ammunition, regimental bands and colours, etc., were all given for the occasion, the Christian bandsmen were ordered to attend, and not a few officers and ladies frequently helped to swell the procession, and add grandeur to the scene.

To the magistrates these holidays were no small matter of anxiety, as they had to take measures for restraining affrays and bloodshed between Hindoos and Mohammedans. It was not unusual for parties of the Sepoys, when excited with drugs, and "mad upon their idolatries," to force their way into every house, and defile all they met with their "Holee"* powder, until the whole station presented a sickening appearance of bacchanalian debauchery. Military duties were on such occasions at a standstill, the

* A crimson powder thrown by the Hindoo devotees on each other, and on all with whom they come in contact. It imparts a hideous appearance, as though a person was covered with gore.

regiments were in a state of utter disorganization, and the cantonment a perfect pandemonium. In such stations as possessed no church, chaplain, or other representative of religion, and where, perhaps, the entire influence emanated from some native female favourite, all castes and outcasts, Hindoo, Mohammedan, and professing Christian, combined in one heterogeneous mob under the patronage of the representatives of the State.

It is doubtful if even these periodical outbursts were so demoralizing as the more insidious but ever-present and all-pervading atmosphere of idolatry. Its effect may be estimated from the current opinion of European officers that Mohammedanism (which always took precedence of Hindooism) was more suitable than Christianity for the natives of India, and that the moral character of its professors equalled, or was superior to, that of Christians. With an amiable leaning towards native interests, everything connected with the habits and customs of the country (which were all interwoven and impregnated with idolatry), was zealously advocated by some of our countrymen, who were thus gradually becoming denationalized. Nor could the natives doubt but that some of these who lived all their lives in India, and died there, were as genuine converts to Hindooism as the

converts of our missionaries are to Christianity.* No uncommon thing was it also for European professors of Christianity to withstand the native converts with the utmost virulence, on the ground that they were apostates from the faith of their fathers.

Another proof of the predominance of this anti-christian principle was manifested by scurrilous attacks on missionaries by the Indian press, or by Indian officers at home. The feeling of enmity to vital Christianity was equally visible in conversation, and in public and private intercourse. As for the hostility of most who exercised authority in regiments, or held a military command, their latent feelings were only kept in abeyance by the circumstance that missionary effort in the Upper Provinces of India was yet almost unknown. The hatred manifested by the Sepoys towards Christians during the Mutiny too well indicates how thoroughly they had shared these feelings with their quondam associates and guides.

The well-known instance of the native [illegible] converted to Christianity at Meerut [illegible] such an

* The memory of such apostates still haunts certain localities, their "high places" being called after their own names, as ——'s Hill, at Saugor, etc. Of many such districts, though nominally under Christian influence, it might well be said, "There was no magistrate in the land that might put them to shame in anything."

† Naik Poorvodheen. (See p. 66.)

event once happened!) shows how the military authorities "stamped out" all such things. He was brought before a military court, reported to the Government as a dangerous character, and removed from the regiment. The European convert, like his congener the native, soon found the place made too hot for him in a native regiment, and was glad of the earliest opportunity to leave the service, which (whether blamcably or not on his part) deprived the army of much of its best material. In cases where more than usual talent and power were possessed, an officer, though religious, would push his way into political employment, where, if he had less favourable materials amongst whom to diffuse his religion, he found less restriction on conscience, and more freedom of action. Some such in the Civil Service, like Dixon at Ajmeer, and Wilkinson at Sehore, became pioneers of civilization and Christianity.

It may be asked how, under such conditions, could our magnificent Eastern Empire have been raised so high? Had not our countrymen redeeming qualities? Certainly they inherited many of the noble characteristics of "merrie England," socially and politically. They were "wise in their generation." Brave in action, and skilful in administration, they exerted over the degraded natives all the

commanding influence of the superior race. But prematurely cut off by their vices, British ascendency was chiefly maintained by incessant supplies of fresh blood from the mother country, and by the utter degradation of the conquered.

We should also distinguish between the action of the Government and its subordinates. The Governor-general and the Home Council were much affected by the public voice, that mainspring of enlightenment. To this we owe the numerous reforms and Christian policy which, though so slowly, have, in numerous channels, carried regenerating influences through India. But even when Lord William Bentinck and his admirable lady were at the head of society, their religious principles hardly touched the social state of India beyond the sound of the Fort William guns. Essential as it was to invest all subordinates in command with a large measure of independent action in the then condition of our remote provinces, isolated through most defective communications, there was generally a strange contrast between the policy advocated at home and that pursued in India, as also between that of the Government in India and their *in*-subordinates. Nay, from the Governor-general down to the commandant of a regiment, it was notorious that the most stringent orders of the home authori-

ties were quietly acknowledged and disregarded. "Every man did what was right in his own eyes." Before the days of steam, overland route, railways, and electric telegraphs, authority was lax in its exercise, and "there was no king in Israel."

Under such a *régime* any conscientious officer who ventured to thwart his local superior must inevitably go to the wall. With a gagged press, and that limited to Calcutta, no appeal to higher authority was ever regarded. A system of semi-official correspondence maintained between all parties a private understanding, that was unanimous as to the suppression of religious liberty. The police system of espionage inaugurated by Napoleon I. was not more effective for this purpose, and British India was a very penal settlement in regard to the isolation and tyranny to which any man of deep religious principle was subjected:—it was a mere military despotism.

Again, it may be asked, Were there in general society no persons of sufficient religious influence to stem the general current of opinion and practice, and resist the universal prevalence of ungodliness? We answer, No; the influence of such was almost imperceptible. The religious principle which some doubtless possessed was kept in secret, or at least in its more practical manifestation was limited to a

small circle, and its influence on public habits was a nullity. Simultaneously with General Wheler's religious awakening, a good work took place in some of the European regiments, through the labours of eminent missionaries and chaplains, and many precious souls were gathered in. But the numerous military stations, composed almost entirely of native troops, never seem to have felt these "droppings from on high," and even where European regiments were stationed, the influence of native habits prevailed extensively. Even looking back on scenes of a much later and better period, one cannot but be conscious of the paralyzing influence exerted on one's mind by the habits of that vast country "wholly given to idolatry." Even missionaries have been obliged to acknowledge that after some years' residence amongst the heathen their sensitiveness to sin and the first disgust produced by the vile practices of the natives became much weakened. How much more—where no voice was raised for God—was the weak Christian, like the more infirm of the infants of ancient Rome, liable to perish through exposure. In Bengal, at least beyond the confines of the Presidency capital, no merchant had traded, no factory had been established; nor, with the solitary exception of Chamberlain (who was quickly despatched under a military

guard to Calcutta), had any missionary been seen. By the Politicals in charge, every pioneer of civilization was regarded as an intruder, as much as an abolitionist was in the Southern States of America. Even the beautiful Himalaya mountains, so adapted for a sanatorium, had been kept from public notice by misrepresentation as to their resources and their suitability for the purpose, as also by the rigid exclusion of European visitors and travellers, whilst our countrymen were dying within a day's march for want of such blessings. Every avenue to progress and improvement was watchfully guarded.

The breaking up of such a complicated and deep-rooted confederacy was not the work of a day, nor in the power of man; but God's providence prepared the way, by the closer union of England and India through steam and the overland route, and by an increased influx of the European race on the cessation of the Company's charter. At first the daily increasing number of marriages of Anglo-Indians with their own countrywomen, and the revolution in private life thus effected, with other agencies, such as the labours of those zealous evangelists, Daniel Wilson, Corrie, and Dealtry, backed up by a few chaplains of kindred spirit, the Fishers, Wybrow, Norgate, White, etc., tending to christianize social manners amongst officers and European

soldiers, only widened the breach between the two races of the East and West, so that a crisis soon appeared inevitable, from which the far-sighted, "foreseeing the evil," prudently withdrew themselves. They were replaced by more daring and reckless youths, like Rehoboam's advisers, who urged on the rage for conquest and military aggrandizement, until the native army attained its majority, and stalked like Goliath through the land, defying everything, and its authors shrank from the Frankenstein of their own creation.

Through calamities and bloodshed alone, as in the case of the Southern States of America, could our sin be expiated and our prestige restored; but before the Mutiny burst as a tempest on the land, it behoved God to have his witness, who should warn of coming judgment, and prophesy, though in sackcloth, to the infatuated native army. Such was *Colonel* Wheler (by which title he was best known), "the apostle of the Sepoys." He lived among them as his family for nearly half a century, and from 1832, the period of his conversion, he did not scruple to declare unto them the whole counsel of God. Witnessing during that period the bloodiest wars and horrors, including that crowning horror of the Mutiny, and threatened in turn by more than one of the successive rulers of

the land, he had but one message to high or low, European or native; whether in his frequent correspondence with Government and its representatives, or in his daily intercourse with all classes, his call to each and every one was to "repent and believe the gospel." Like another Elijah in a period of general ungodliness, he at first stood almost alone "before the Lord God of Israel." "No weapon formed against him prospered." He survived in peace every ruler that assailed him, and saw the Government itself superseded and the Bengal native army, its instrument, destroyed. He had converts of his own stamp, "faithful unto death," as preachers of the gospel, and, above all, he lived to behold the decay of old customs, and the rise of a new generation, with a godly Governor-general after his own heart.

CHAPTER II.

THE Whelers were an ancient family, settled in Worcester since 1310, and they are still possessed of an ancient baronetcy in that neighbourhood. The family was conspicuous for its devotion to the royal cause at the Revolution. Some of its members held high offices under the Stuarts. In later times their descendants have attained prominent positions in the East India Service. The family motto, "*Facie tenens*" ("Even to the face"), might aptly represent him whom we are about to portray.

Descended from this good old stock, which has furnished thews and sinews to our army and navy, Stephen Glyn Wheler, the subject of this memoir, was born at the family seat in the quiet village of Leamington Hastings, nine miles from Leamington, on the 29th March, 1802. He was educated at Rugby, nine miles from his home, and was chiefly remarkable for an honesty and frankness of character that made him a general favourite. At this time he had not any trace of that serious thought which marked his later years.

Favoured by birth, constitution, and training with those qualities which have distinguished the military and naval services of our country, he landed in India at the tender age of sixteen, when, if education was incomplete, character and disposition were yet plastic to receive impressions of Oriental life as they presented themselves to one who was at once an English gentleman and the subaltern of a Sepoy regiment. With all the buoyancy of youthful hope, and amidst the dawning antecedents of the British Eastern Empire, young Wheler entered the battle of Indian life while as yet the Mahratta confederacy was unbroken and Bhurtpore uncaptured; whilst on every side the powerful independent states of Nepaul, Burmah, Scinde, the Punjab, and Afghanistan, yet in their integrity, were plotting against the new adventurer from the West.

As regards his home training, Wheler might boast like Paul, of being "a Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law a Pharisee," and he was now being initiated into the arts of military life and the time-honoured customs of India, which enabled our countrymen to exert the power of the superior mind to conquer and rule the inferior. For twelve years the young officer walked in the ways of the world; his own ambition and carnal desires occupied his

time and his thoughts. According to the custom of those days, he looked forward and made progress towards acquiring a fortune, which every one expected to carry home with him, after spending his prime of life and years in the country. His moral habits and energy qualified him for success in this object, so that after a few years, having obtained his promotion to a captaincy at an early date, he had through the kind offices of Calcutta agents accumulated a considerable sum.

He passed this period of youth in the fertile but debauched province of Oude, from which most of our Sepoys are recruited. He also passed through the ordeal of "Lucknow," in India notorious even in those days for every vice, and not the less on that account a favourite station with the native army and their European officers. Wheler had here, at least, every opportunity for learning the habits, language, etc., of the Sepoys, and becoming initiated into camp life; and we find that he was remarkable at that period for his activity and speed of foot, getting command of the light company, which he retained many years.

Already he began to indulge in a little castle-building—how he was to return home, and having secured a sweet partner in life, was to revel in all the domestic enjoyments which his native land, old

friends, and above all his snug little fortune, would procure him; but in the meanwhile, as on the "sinews of war," his whole soul was concentred on his savings, or, as one of his brother officers used to remark, "his heart was in his money-bags." He was thoroughly devoted to earthly enjoyments, and in all its lawfully accessible forms "he withheld not his heart from any good." Female society, in the scanty measure in which it then existed in the Upper Provinces, had peculiar charms for him; and being of a domestic, amiable disposition, he was constantly found accompanying the ladies at the piano with his flute. This, with field sports, for he was somewhat partial to shooting, varied the dull routine of his regimental life. In 1832 he made a short trip into the "Colo" country, where the aborigines in utter barbarism, armed only with bows and arrows, had drawn down some threatening military demonstrations; and this embraced almost the total of Wheler's experience of active service during the entire fifty years of his Indian career.

It was whilst engaged in a distant station of Central India, called Saugor, somewhere about 1829, and when it might be truly said of him, "God was not in all his thoughts," that Wheler was visited with a dangerous illness, which brought

him to the verge of death. Terribly alarmed in the prospect, and conscious of all his unpreparedness, fearfulness and trembling took hold upon him. In his distress he called upon the Lord, and cried unto his God. Perhaps the want of any Christian voice to point him to Jesus aggravated his condition. Probably he had hitherto never heard an evangelical sermon, nor learnt the merest rudiments of Christianity.

Conscience being thus left to do its worst, most dreadful was its voice in the ears of the sinner. He was shut up, perhaps happily, to that solitariness which has so often, in the "far country," brought the prodigal, when he has come to himself, to say, "I will arise and go to my Father." But to him it was a long and a weary journey; he was yet afar off, farther than from his native land, though in those days it was the best part of a year's journey thither from those remote regions. For many months, under what divines term "law-work," did Wheler endure the lashes of outraged conscience, and continue the vain attempt of building up a righteousness by works. The burden grew but the heavier, for, as it has been often remarked, where the Lord designs any for special usefulness, He frequently digs the foundation thus deeply, by painfully leading them through the wilderness "by

a way they know not," before giving them a prospect of the promised land.

Wheler long retained a vivid recollection of that terrible march around Sinai, and had a lively sense of God's mercy in raising up instruments for his relief. He was always ready to tell others what God had done for his soul; and thus many, under similar difficulties, were encouraged to hope in the Lord.

His regiment about this time was ordered to Calcutta and Barrackpore, somewhere about 1830-31, and he preceded it a few months on leave. He then eagerly sought for spiritual counsel, and not in vain. No part of India was so highly favoured with religious ordinances and persons of eminent piety as Calcutta, amidst the fluctuating society ever passing through it to the Upper Provinces, and the current of mercantile and military men ebbing and flowing with the changes of every season. There was Archdeacon Daniel Corrie, to whom Wheler is thought to have been specially indebted for spiritual guidance, and his successor, Dealtry; there was also the Diocesan, Daniel Wilson. But time would fail to tell of Dr. Duff, Boswell, Lacroix, Carey, Marshman, and other eminent clergymen—lights of the world, intellectually and spiritually. Here Wheler was "in Goshen," where

"they had light in their dwellings;" and doubtless, after his conversion, he gladly availed himself of the spiritual privileges here open to him. Often has he spoken with deep feeling of the refreshment he received to his soul at that place; but his was too genuine a work of God, and Wheler too decided a character, to be, *at this stage of conviction*, fully met by the aid they rendered, nor were his Calcutta friends the men to daub with untempered mortar.

Even in Calcutta, with its means of grace, Wheler could not find all he sought. It is difficult, in the absence of his own explanation, fully to ascertain the cause of this. Various things may have combined to shut out the light from his soul. He was of a retiring, shy disposition, and in all probability concealed, in a great measure, the depth of conviction under which he laboured; so that even in the occasional visits he paid to such eminent Christian clergymen as Archdeacon Corrie and Daniel Wilson, his case might not have been understood. There is also reason to believe that he made few intimate acquaintances amongst godly people, through whose friendly intercourse help would have been more naturally found.

Wheler was designed for a different sphere of labour, and his character had to be formed after another type and by peculiar agency. The Lord

was even now saying to him, "Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles."

> "Still in his sea-beat prison his Lord and he held tryst,
> *Calcutta* was not heaven, and preachers were not Christ."

He went back to his Bible and to his God. He spent about a year in searching the Scriptures, and in his then utter ignorance of the scheme and fundamentals of Christianity, he acknowledged his great obligation to "Scott's Commentary," which, by the advice of Bishop Wilson, he "perused from beginning to end." Being of a devotional frame of mind, he found a little book, "Sacra Privata," by Dr. Wilson, the apostolic bishop of Sodor and Man, a great help to him, and for several years he took every opportunity of circulating it amongst those whom he found seriously disposed. His attachment to two books of such opposite principles proves how much he was left to his own guidance.

It was thus in the use of such a variety of means that Wheler at last found deliverance from his burden. This was as complete as when Christian's load fell into the sepulchre; and, as described by Bunyan, it was at the sight of the cross. He then obtained a large acquaintance with the mystery of salvation, for God had "opened his understanding to understand the Scriptures." Nor did he ever

lose the blessing. With one short exception, yet to be mentioned, "the candle of God shined upon his head," he could always say, "My glory is fresh in me, and my bow is renewed in my hand." From that time God's Word became the Book of books to him; he studied it unremittingly. It furnished him with his armour against all the enemies he was henceforth to encounter, and with an inexhaustible supply of strength and comfort for the warfare. Even during some deep fluctuations of opinion on doctrines not fundamental, which he experienced in after years, his earliest views of truth remained unshaken, and with all his characteristic enthusiasm towards certain authors, and his zeal in circulating them, they never came into competition with his first-formed views of truth, and ardent attachment to the Word of God, which, as a substratum of rock, formed the foundation of his character and work.

No sooner had Wheler attained thus to "joy and peace in believing," than his thoughts reverted to his old comrades and friends in the regiment. With all the ardour of first love, he went from house to house to tell them what God had done for his soul; nor did he go forth under mere impulse of natural feeling, but reluctantly and constrained by sense of duty. He had previously a great struggle with natural pride or diffidence (that

bold-faced villain, Mr. Shame, as Bunyan calls him), to which Wheler was extremely sensitive. It was only after earnest prayer for Divine aid that he triumphed over all carnal excuses. He then realized God's "strength perfected in weakness," and "so spake that many believed." It was thought that, with one or two exceptions, all the officers were then or at no long interval brought to the Lord, so that soon after the 34th Regiment N.I., which had previously been pre-eminent in the usual ungodliness of our countrymen in the native army, became distinguished for the piety of its officers, and known even by the world as "The Bishop's Own!" Not a few in the regiment preceded him to the heavenly rest, and were ready to welcome him as the means of their conversion to God.

One of the first enemies he had to encounter after his conversion was his old sin of covetousness. He for a considerable time had felt dissatisfied with himself, being conscious of his over-attachment to his money, and excessive anxiety about his hoardings. It often brought him so low that he had to cry unto the Lord for deliverance from this, his easily besetting sin. For a time it appeared all in vain. It so happened that in 1832, whilst he was engaged in the "Cole" country, a commercial crisis occurred, affecting the agency houses in Calcutta; and

amongst those that failed was the one which had Wheler's money, and that of the medical officer of the 34th. It was all swallowed up. The doctor and Wheler received the tidings at the same time. The doctor cut his throat but Wheler praised the Lord! He said that the moment the news arrived he felt inexpressibly relieved, and recognizing God's hand in the matter, returned heartfelt thanks to Him for thus answering his prayers. Nor from that moment did a shade of regret for the loss sadden his heart. Henceforth he understood his duty, and determined never again to save money—a resolution he persevered in to the last, although generally in command, and drawing very handsome allowances—six or seven times what he needed on his self-denying scale of expenditure. Another incident about this time proved his decision of character: feeling his old love to music parties too great a temptation, he deliberately broke in pieces his beloved flute, a valuable one by Rudall, which he had procured from England at considerable expense; nor did he ever again indulge in the amusement. Some may regard this as asceticism, and so it might be in this favoured land; but in India at that time the Christian had to throw away every weight, and journey on in light marching order.

CHAPTER III.

WHELER'S next move was in 1833, to Midnapore, a small station of native troops, fifty or sixty miles west of Calcutta, in the jungles. Here, amidst the usual amusements and dissipations, he found little to interest him. He was probably continuing his private reading, with other modes of redeeming the time, hitherto so utterly wasted in his military as well as Christian position. Previous to his conversion Wheler, though a Rugby scholar (before Arnold's time), was little superior to many of his Sepoys in the qualifications for any responsible command. We need not be surprised, therefore, at the obscure position he occupied during these few years.

It was when the 34th Regiment next moved; in 1834-5, to Futtyghur, a flourishing city on the Ganges, near Agra, in the most populous and warlike part of India, that a field first presented itself for the development of his character and graces. Here was quite an incipient colony of uncovenanted *employés*, chiefly Eurasian—a much-neglected class

ıe days, but rapidly rising, under all their ,sing circumstances, to offices of responsi- .. .y and positions of honour.

The clothing agency for supplying the army, and the gun carriage agency, gave much lucrative employment, and the only tent manufactory at that time in Bengal was in this station. These, with a arge cantonment of native troops, presented a wide field, which had hitherto lain fallow.

In his new-born zeal, the great enterprise of the day could hardly have escaped Wheler's notice, and it is probable he had imbibed the blessed missionary spirit from some of its devoted adherents in Calcutta; for about this time, having learnt to read the Testament in the vernacular, he was accustomed to collect his servants, and those hangers-on who were to be found about every officer's house, to hear the Scriptures read and explained. He soon acquired a ready utterance in conversing with them also on Christianity. The usual familiar intercourse of officers with their men would have prepared the way as regards the language ("Oordoo," the camp language of North India, and generally understood throughout), so that he would be at little difficulty. Thus would his great mission to the Sepoys be inaugurated in a natural, unaffected manner through his daily avocations. It might be truly said—

"The common round, the daily task,
Afforded all that he could ask:
Room to deny himself; a road
To bring him daily nearer God."

The natives of India living so much in the open air, unequalled opportunities are presented for obtaining familiar intercourse and conversation on any subject. In Calcutta, where our countrymen, with their numerous and flourishing institutions for learning, religion, and mercantile transactions, to say nothing of their warlike prestige, had such an overwhelming supremacy over the poor, degraded, priest-ridden Bengalees, there could be little community of sentiment or genial intercourse. Even those who, like Rammohun Roy, affected the habits and principles of western lands, were held very cheap by the European community of those days; and as for a convert to Christianity, he was an outcast. It was very different in the Upper Provinces. The inhabitants of the "Doab," between the Jumna and Ganges, were the "Norman" blood of India, and on the theatre of Mohammedan conquest and their imperial splendours, which were yet fresh in their traditions, they held at best but a divided allegiance between their western conquerors and the titulary power at Delhi. Alive to every fresh enterprise of the day in religion or politics, of which that locality

was so productive, they exhibited a conscious independence, inclining them, however, to meet our advances to familiar intercourse with a kind of fellow-feeling for our position as co-adventurers. It has always been found, too, that the further travellers have penetrated towards the north-west, the closer have been the ties of intimacy effected with the people, from their nearer approximation in character to the conquerors from the West. The travels of Burnes, Conolly, A. Abbott, Wolff, and Elphinstone, etc., as well as our experience during the deeply-to-be-deplored invasion of Afghanistan, confirm and illustrate this important fact. Futtyghur was sufficiently leavened with this Mohammedan independence, as distinguished from the sycophancy of the Bengalees, whilst it combined abundance of the bigotry of the one with the superstition of the other.

Here then Wheler felt his spirit stirred within him, when he saw the city "wholly given to idolatry," but feeling himself as a Christian in a new world, removed alike from the supremacy of western civilization and religious enterprise, the whole field a moral jungle, he had yet to learn the rudiments of evangelistic effort in the college of practical experiment. Imitating the examples of Henry Martyn, Daniel Corrie, and Chamberlain, he

raised Christ's banner, and boldly proclaimed his supremacy over all the rival sects of the land, and prosecuted his mission in the great camp which, under British rule, already virtually governed Hindostan.

Before, however, he was permitted fully to realize his mission to the heathen, God brought him through an ordeal of painful bodily suffering. For months he was laid low by sickness, and was so debilitated, that a French physician passing through the station, on examining his lungs with a stethoscope, declared that one lung was irremediably gone, and privately assured his brother officers that they would soon obtain "a step." The affection, whether bronchitis or asthma, used to keep him awake all night coughing and expectorating, and he declared the peace and heavenly consolation he enjoyed were such that the hours never seemed heavy. The Lord having more work for his servant, He without medical agency raised him up again, saying, as it were, "I will add to thy days thirty years!"

A crisis seems to have taken place, and after boils had broken out over all his body, by which he endured severe pain, his health was comparatively restored, and his soul greatly quickened by the experience he had thus had of God's goodness and the world's emptiness.

After this sickness he was never very robust,

and was subject to periodical returns of the affection of his chest, which although it never entirely laid him aside, weakened his strength by the way, so that he was for the time reduced by it to skin and bone. Amidst it all he never relaxed in his labours for any long interval. His constitution must have been naturally strong to have sustained him in such a climate, under such labour and self-denial as he underwent; but his maxim, which his career illustrated most fully, was that it was "better to wear out than to rust out." He mentioned that the secret of his strength, and of the continued liveliness of his spirit, lay in the ardent yearning of his soul for unbroken communion with God. His habits of devotion were regular and constant, and deeply spiritual, realizing the eternal world in all his approaches to the mercy-seat. He would never dispense with entire privacy, saying that he could not enjoy his personal devotion if the dearest friend or relative were present. Yet he seemed to carry the presence of God with him in all scenes, companies, and duties. It was the same to him whether he was drilling the regiment, presiding at a committee, walking the street, or preaching in a chapel—

> "He ever brought Him where he came;
> And going, took Him to his home."

In after years he remarked that when going forth at early dawn, he felt sometimes so oppressed by bodily weakness that he could hardly walk. No sooner did he find himself surrounded by a crowd in the bazaar, than, beginning to converse, his strength gradually revived, so that he returned refreshed and invigorated to go through all the duties of the day! To outward appearance he was as "a reed shaken by the wind." "The joy of the Lord was his strength."

The numerous professing Christians in Futtyghur first engaged Wheler's attention, and by conversation and distributing tracts he earnestly sought to warn them of their danger amidst the abounding ungodliness and practical atheism of the place. No man hitherto caring for their souls, and enveloped in the midst of the vast heathen population, they had sunk lower and lower in their vices. To some of them Wheler was as the voice of one "bringing glad tidings of good, and publishing salvation," and especially to the remnant of Portuguese and French extraction, who were outcasts in religion from every party. These, like the Canaanitish woman, often manifested a surprising amount of faith, and regarded Wheler as an angel sent from heaven; but with the majority of Protestant and European races this feeling wore off as a novelty, and immersed in

worldly prosperity, they "turned back, one to his farm and another to his merchandise." Proud of their superior advantages as the ruling class, they held aloof from the poor and wretched towards whom his attention was being more and more directed, until at length he was compelled to say, "Seeing YE count yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Leaving his own people and his father's house, he became identified with the interests, temporal and eternal, of the poor natives.

Wheler would take his Hindostani Bible to the bazaar of the city, and read and preach (probably explaining the meaning at first very imperfectly) to the crowds who always throng the streets, and amongst whom the novelty of a European, and he an officer, speaking to them publicly on Christianity, was a matter of general amazement. "The whole city was moved," and Wheler spoke of the scenes of daily occurrence as closely resembling those described in the Acts of the Apostles. It took him quite by surprise; he could hardly credit the fact. But, as he realized that there was indeed a quickening of men's souls under the power of divine truth, if he did not take offence like Jonah, he at least shrunk back from the responsibility so unexpectedly thrown upon him, cut off as he was from commu-

nication with the Christian world. Still he dared not "draw back" from his work, and for months was the gospel thus going forth, not in word only, but "in demonstration of the Spirit and in power." Thus, through the constant intercommunication of Futtyghur with the many great cities around, the leaven could not but pervade the country far and near. It seems to have resembled a similar movement described by Judson as having taken place throughout Burmah at a certain critical period of his labours; it came, apparently without effort, after years of patient toil. Doubtless in Futtyghur also some hidden agencies had prepared the way; one had ploughed and another had sowed what Wheler had reaped; yet beyond a passing visit of Heber or Wilson, Corrie or Chamberlain, it is difficult to trace the precursor of this "revival," for such it really was. It is notorious that familiarity with the general facts of Christianity had long been an indigenous fruit throughout India, and God may thus, by ever-deepening instrumentalities and multiplied agencies, have been drawing out the thoughts and inquiries of these naturally reflective heathen, to prepare them for a reception of the truth thus unexpectedly, but boldly, brought to their view.

The circumstances of the times, too, were favour-

able. Whilst India was still enjoying profound and unexampled tranquillity, rumours of wars, famine, and pestilence—the latter from the Pallee plague, the first from the impending invasion of Afghanistan—stirred the minds of these excitable people in expectation of something extraordinary. An awful event in Providence was about to more than realize their worst anticipations and desolate these luxuriant provinces with famine, pestilence, and death. As has so frequently happened, revival was the precursor of judgment. Wheler stood up amongst these profligate idolaters and proud followers of the false prophet in somewhat of the spirit and power of Elijah; and as though he had said to them, "There shall not be dew nor rain these years," the heavens were shut for eighteen months, and under that scorching sky, hardly ever shaded by a cloud, the earth became as iron. Neither seedtime nor harvest was obtained for nearly two years, during which period millions perished of starvation and its pestilential consequences. Brahmins, who had before rejected their own cooked food if the defiled Christian had come too near, were now seen by us stealing the scraps from our dogs; and mothers sold their infants to the despised foreigners, or left them a prey to the wolves which fattened on the spoil. Society was utterly disorganized, and terrors and

horrors of every kind pervaded the land. Here was the great sphere of Wheler's devoted efforts. Aided by our countrymen's subscriptions, which were called forth by his appeals and by the stimulus of his example, he distributed amongst the natives the bread that perisheth, and he accompanied this help with the words of everlasting life, now more welcome than ever to those whose earthly career was fast closing. He also collected the castaway infants and children, and saved many lives, hereafter to form, under his personal training, the nucleus of the now well-known Futtyghur Mission, and the nursery of that crop of martyrs which during the Mutiny brought so sweet an offering of first-fruits of the Indian church.

Awful were the sights amidst the crowds accumulated in the famine-stricken cities of the Doab; those who witnessed them will never forget the sickening odour that came from that reeking mass of misery; and still more fearful were the revelations of deepest-dyed vice; yet amidst all Wheler but felt impelled thereby to greater zeal in his labour of love. In the height of the famine, having organized arrangements for succouring the helpless in Futtyghur, and having secured their permanence by the aid of the American missionary, Mr. Wilson, who providentially arrived from the United States at that

crisis, Wheler, having been ordered with a wing of the 34th to Agra, carried thither the same single purpose, and in that yet wider sphere, and amidst equal suffering, he continued his Christian efforts.

CHAPTER IV.

AGRA, which had just been constituted the seat of government for the North-west Provinces, was about one hundred miles from Futtyghur, and with its rich citizens, its venerable monuments of departed glory, and its populous surrounding villages, formed a highly-important sphere of labour. It was now the focus of misery; here the famine had culminated in the concentration of tens of thousands (more than 300,000, besides the usual inhabitants), attracted from throughout the Doab in the hope of aid from the Government, until this mass of pestilential humanity created an epidemic which swept away from two to three hundred a day for months. Although the Government, still "withholding the corn," permitted this mortality, some of the European community acted nobly, and a relief society already in operation was affording relief; but what was that amongst so many? for it was but a handful of raw meal, serving merely to tantalize the starving multitudes, and too often hastening the death of the recipient, when

swallowed raw for fear some stronger wretch should seize it, and perhaps sacrifice life in his ravenous fury. Here again Wheler was the presiding spirit, infusing fresh energy into the little band who were already engaged in the work. Here too, numerous orphans, rescued and trained in Christian nurture, became the nucleus of Christian villages which honourably endured the ordeal of the Mutiny.

Thus passed those fearful years 1837-8, during which Wheler was occupied in alleviating the horrors of famine and pestilence amongst the heathen. At length a merciful God sent rain, and the Government, though late, sent help to assist the few survivors to resume agricultural operations in their villages, so that once again Agra was restored to somewhat of tranquillity.

Unlike every other station out of Calcutta, Agra possessed a lively Christian community, and churches, both Episcopalian and Baptist, in a healthy condition, with a devoted minister in each. Wheler, quick to appreciate such advantages, saw here fresh calls to labour, for a vast heathen population extended on every hand, and the one devoted Baptist missionary (Williams) was much engaged with the Europeans and "Eurasians." In the back-slums of the cantonments Wheler re-opened one of the soldiers' chapels built by the men of Havelock's

regiment (H.M.'s 13th).* Here for two years he held a nightly religious service for persons of every class attached to barracks. In the daytime he visited the hospitals, always containing many of our countrymen suffering from the effects of excess. To the guard-rooms and prisons he was a constant and welcome visitor. There being but one chaplain, and he then absent on sick leave, Wheler found too many poor hardened wretches with "no man to care for their souls." Some of the most desperate characters manifested change of conduct under his ministration, and all were deeply touched by his kindness. "The blessing of them that were ready to perish" descended abundantly upon him. In the absence of the European regiments in Afghanistan, their families left behind in destitution obtained much of his sympathy and attention, and though notorious for the wickedness that prevailed amongst them, some were awakened to seek salvation. An interchange of letters on the all-important subject became at that time common between the families in Agra and the regiment in Cabul, where also simultaneously a work of revival was in progress.

For a time the little chapel was crowded, and a deep anxiety was manifested by many about

* They did the same in almost every station they occupied.

their souls, some of whom afterwards gave tokens of having been saved. Here, as in Futtyghur, however, this work was transient among the European soldiers, for they gave up attending the meetings and relapsed into the prevailing vices. On a sudden summons at the hottest season to march against a rebellious rajah's fort, the drunkenness amongst the artillery was so fearful that four or five were drowned in wells or otherwise perished by the roadside, victims to drink, during the first two or three days' march. Thus again Wheler was made to feel that his mission was chiefly to the heathen.

He collected many of the waifs and outcast native children, and taught them "daily in his own hired house," after the duties of the regiment (which were chiefly carried out before breakfast) were over. Here, beginning at A B C, he led them on until they were able to read and understand the fundamental truths of Christianity, and deeply interesting was it to see the power he exercised over their young hearts, for before he left the station they had become such ardent disciples that they would invariably follow him to the large weekly market, and in the most intrepid manner profess their belief in his teaching. Some, attempting to follow his example, exposed the folly of the customs and beliefs of idolatry, enduring a full measure of scorn and

threatening from their countrymen for their apostasy from Hindooism. Although one officer had previously preached to the natives in Agra, such was the fluctuation of a population ever on pilgrimage to their holy land in that neighbourhood, that Wheler never lacked a fresh succession of crowds to learn for the first time "the strange things he was bringing to their ears."

Hitherto Wheler seems to have been satisfied with sowing the seed without reaping, nor had he up to this time been privileged to see, as the result of his labours, any case of professed conversion. His preaching seems to have been a call to repentance, and the effect, as with John the Baptist, an outward and temporary change of life amongst Europeans and natives, Christian and unconverted alike. To secure fruit and render the work more permanent, some of the most experienced of God's people of all classes consulted with Wheler as to a more combined and systematic agency for preaching the gospel to the heathen, but especially among the densely-populated villages scattered through the Agra district. Very interesting public meetings were held in connection with this first indigenous missionary society, most of the promoters of which survive at the present day. Through the agency of native preachers alone this enterprise was set in motion,

and for several years the glad tidings were thus conveyed and preached effectively to many hundred villages, and to multitudes who never before heard of it. Nor did the association ever cease from its labours, but as the various denominations established themselves in Agra, with their respective missionary agencies, "The Agra Native Missionary Society" blended into the various distinct societies of these different branches of the church. It was through its special action that, during its eight years' active operations, in the course of which 600 out of 1100 of the villages in the district were visited, a movement towards Christianity first began amongst the agricultural and weaver class of the village of Chittoura, sixteen miles from Agra, from which it gathered several converts, and a native church sprang up there as the result. Here it was that the Rev. James Smith first raised his missionary banner, on the foundation still existing revived the cause of Christ, gathered out a Christian village, and formed a factory of weavers, on the European model, with Scotch looms. And here, too, after all had passed through the fire of the Mutiny persecution, which afforded that noble "Martyr of Delhi," Wallayat Ali (a convert of Wheler's), the village was again raised from its ruins, the scattered church restored, and the former happy scenes of Christian

privilege renewed under the ministrations of Wheler, when he brought hither his flock of orphans saved from another famine, that of 1859-60, subsequently closing his life and labours of love in their midst.

It was during his next visit to Agra that the same band of Christian people united in establishing the "Bible Society of the North-west Provinces," in which Wheler also took an active part. From this also, as it continued to enlarge its operations with every fresh acquisition of territory and every new mission to hitherto neglected nations and tongues, the waters of life flowed in a stream broad, full, and pure, to irrigate the waste places and carry fertility and joy throughout the Eastern Empire. This also sprang up again, like the phœnix from its ashes, at the close of the Mutiny, and still, with "its youth renewed as the eagle's," fulfils the anticipations of its founders. In connection with it a depository of religious publications in English has been, and is still, widely blessed in diffusing wholesome knowledge not only in Agra, but also among the many remote stations of our European troops, and the numerous isolated families of covenanted and uncovenanted *employés* in civil and military life, so thickly strewed over the face of the country, and generally destitute of every Christian privilege.

Another valuable institution that owed its rise

to the same period was the Benevolent Institution for instruction in Christianity of the native and other neglected children attached to the European community. This, with its sister school for children connected with the native regiments, performed its part also, and owed much to the constant supervision and loving instruction which Wheler continued to afford them at each succeeding visit to Agra, up to the time of his death. The superintendent of the last was attended at his dying hour by Wheler, in 1861, not long previous to his own departure, affording him a good hope that in this case his instructions had been blessed.

The numerous schools existing, or then first established, formed a very important branch of our friend's labours. His own childlike disposition and winning manner drew the hearts of the young very quickly; and his noble presence, so dignified and yet so mild, was eminently attractive. With a beautiful countenance, his smile often lighted up his face with an irresistible grace, so that merely to listen to his conversation was always felt to be a high privilege and gratification. He was accustomed in his walks to engage those he met in friendly talk, which, with remarkable skill, he could always turn into a religious channel; and those who were thus addressed always felt at ease in his

presence, whether spoken to on the parade ground, in the public walks, or in his own room.

He generally invited some one of the officers, who was young and inexperienced, to live with him; and in cases where, as so commonly occurred in India, the reckless habits of the country had produced darkness of mind and misery, his tender advice and loving society were often the means of restoring such wanderers to the ways of peace. More than one can bless his labour of love as the means of extricating them "from the horrible pit and miry clay, setting their feet upon the rock, and establishing their way." More effectual than anything in such cases was his own example. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." The closer you inspected his habits and disposition, the more were you impressed with the genuineness of his character. He had the faculty of inspiring admiration and love in an eminent degree. It generally happened that people either manifested towards him very warm affection or decided enmity. Characters of extreme ungodliness, who had thrown off the restraints of society, and defied all opinion, sometimes came in collision with Wheler, and occasionally to their unexpected benefit: thus an individual of the higher class, who openly professed

infidelity, and despised and rejected the efforts of Christians, was visited at his own request by Wheler, and brought to such deep conviction of his sin and danger, that he soon made over to him all his infidel books, seeking his counsel and prayers.

Wheler was specially useful at the death-bed, and in that land of acute disease and sudden death was often called to sustain the hopes of the dying. In the case of a young officer just married, and only lately arrived in the country, Wheler, together with other good Samaritans, was unwearied in ministering to his alarmed soul until there was every hope that ere his decease he had passed from death unto life.

As previously remarked, there was a little band of earnest Christians in Agra. These were accustomed, according to a frequent habit in India, to meet weekly at each other's houses for prayer and reading of the Scriptures. Very sweet was such fellowship in places where, perhaps, there was no other recognition of Christianity; and even at Agra it constituted "a feast of fat things" to those "hungering and thirsting after righteousness." There Thomason, the gifted secretary of Government, and afterwards Governor of the North-west Provinces, a man in many respects resembling Wheler in his mild dignity of manner often pre-

sided, contributing much to the meeting by his deep experience, and profound acquaintance with God's Word. The fluctuations of Indian society gave a deeper interest to the meetings; as the circle was frequently enlarged by the addition of casual visitors, and by this means a bond of union stronger than death was often formed. Some of the members of the society continued their correspondence from scenes of danger: more than one fell in the Cabul warfare, and others only escaped through the sufferings of a long captivity. Wheler was a highly-valued member of these re-unions; "swift to hear, slow to speak," his quiet gravity diffused a reverence befitting the occasion, whilst his deep spirituality kept up the standard of the meeting, and prevented it from falling into levity or trivialities.

Wheler and his fellow-labourers had the gratification of welcoming those eminent men of God, Pfander and Hærnle, to take charge of hundreds of orphans rescued from the famine, and lay the foundation of the Christian villages at Secundra, with other missionary institutions, which have since made Agra as a "garden of the Lord." To have seen Agra in 1837 with its accumulation of ruins and ravines, the resort of wolves and murderers, and to see it now, one [illegible] exclaim, "What hath God wrought!"

Amidst all this spiritual experience and active usefulness, Wheler was being trained for the one object, in the carrying out of which he was to become specially God's champion and messenger. The implication of our Indian Government in the idolatrous and false religions of the country was coming to a climax, and their servants, too generally carried away by the overweening assumption of infallibility that began to mark public orders, went with the current, or submitted, and too often without protest, to what opposed their common sense and British feeling, if not their conscience. From the equivocal position our Government had assumed in their Afghanistan policy, pledged, as the mercenaries of the Cabul Government,* to sustain Mohammedanism of the most ultra spirit, they enforced on their officers the payment of any homage demanded by the superstitions of the country, whilst they were forbidden, on pain of dismissal from the force and being sent back to our provinces in disgrace, to give tracts or Scriptures, or to speak about Christianity. The Koran alone was to be honoured, the established religion alone acknowledged. The first flush of triumph in Cabul had

* Besides [illegible] the pay of the Cabul Government as a subsidiary force, all our army was placed at their disposal for *a consideration* of more value to our Government than money.

intoxicated our rulers, and the spirit of intolerance amongst those in power required all the dauntless faith of a Havelock, and his little band of like spirits, to resist. Blessed be God, they did resist, and even at Cabul established a public profession of Christianity and religious fellowship, and were honoured of God in upholding the faith of many of his dear children, if not of converting some of the unbelieving to God. Solemn and deep as are the judgments of Jehovah, it were stone blindness not to remark that those thus branded as fools for Christ's sake were brought through the terrible catastrophe which demolished the vaunted enterprise of the Government, not only with safety, but by a career of heroism and victory which attracted the admiration of all Europe.

It was whilst this noble stand was being made at Cabul by our European soldiers, that Wheler was called to do the same in the midst of the native army. It was to be expected that the unusual course adopted by him, an officer of standing (then commanding the 31th Regiment), that of going out to preach in the markets,—as well as the unusual interest excited amongst the Sepoys, his most attentive hearers,—would not pass without public notice in a community by no means remarkable for godliness. Wheler's faithfulness in personally addressing

all who came within his reach, regarding their souls, made him highly unpopular with officers and persons in their station of life; his standing aloof from the dissipation and worldly parties of the station increased these feelings; but what brought the opposition to fever-heat of fury, was a matter affecting the connivance of officers personally, in accordance with the understood wishes of the Government, at the idolatrous practices of the Sepoys. On occasion of one of the native idolatrous festivals, when Mohammedan, Hindoo, and Christian, all fraternized in grand processions and revelry, the native officers of the 34th Regiment N.I. came to Wheler according to custom, to obtain his sanction for their using the regimental band, colours, tents, ammunition, etc., for their ceremonies. Wheler kindly but firmly remonstrated with them on the wickedness of the whole affair, but especially on the utter impossibility of him, a Christian officer, who had constantly condemned such practices, now giving countenance to them. The change from invariable precedent roused great hostility against him on the part of the officers of the native regiments, and other of his countrymen destitute of religion (to say nothing of some weak brethren). As regarded the Sepoys, they expressed themselves quite satisfied, and only admired Wheler the more for his consis-

tency; nor did they renew their application either then or on any subsequent anniversary.

The *Christian* officers never forgave him this exposure of their irreligion, and thus the opposition to Wheler reached head-quarters. The war first commenced with anonymous attacks by the Calcutta press, in which "The Friend of India" stood alone as usual in defence of Wheler, and in the cause of truth and right. His religious efforts were denounced as a crusade against the religion of the natives, and all the threadbare sophistries of Scott Waring and Sidney Smith were raked up afresh by this unholy confederacy. The battle fought by Macaulay, Wilberforce, Grant, and others, in parliament, to obtain an ecclesiastic recognition for their countrymen in India, was to be fought in Agra to secure those countrymen liberty of conscience in their daily avocations amidst the natives of the land.

In consequence of the notoriety thus procured for Wheler, the Government could not but institute inquiries regarding his proceedings, and the persons "consorting with him," and in due course he received an official communication through "Jas. Thomason, Secretary," from "Mr. Robertson, Lt.-Governor of the North-west Provinces," requesting an explanation for the information of the Govern-

ment as to the extent to which Wheler "carried his interference with the religious habits of the Sepoys, and who were his accomplices, and to what extent they had succeeded in their efforts," etc. The Governor and his secretary were too religious, not to say enlightened, in their character to permit themselves to be made tools of by popular outcry, in which the whole affair originated; and after a friendly personal interview between Wheler and Thomason, the result was that the former wrote an explanation of his conduct and principles, such as in the times of Tertullian and Trypho, or later of Luther, would have been entitled an Apology for Christianity! At the same time he boldly asserted his liberty and determination to preach the gospel whensoever and wheresoever his judgment determined; that whilst he acknowledged his duty in earthly matters to the Government, and would faithfully "render unto Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's," he felt equally bound to render unto God the things that were God's. Thus ended this affair of outposts in Wheler's favour, for he continued his usual course, excepting that he so far yielded to the wishes of the authorities as to promise not to preach at all within the lines of the native regiments, nor anywhere else in his regimental uniform. Whatever may have been Thomason's

private opinion of Wheler's conduct in this matter, he never intermitted his friendship towards him, but to the end of his own honoured career as Lieut.-Governor of the North-west Provinces, expressed himself as his warm ally and admirer.

Just before the 34th Regiment left Agra, Wheler was sent in command of the residency escort to Gwalior. Here he was enabled to put his principles to a full test, it being an independent native state, and the few Europeans attached to the resident, as though by sufferance, met with little encouragement, even had they the desire, to manifest their Christianity. Although he established a weekly religious service on Sunday, he appears to have seen little fruit amongst his countrymen, and as usual turned to the "Gentiles." Even here, however, God had not left himself without human witness, for since the time of the liberal-minded Ackbar and his Christian wife, the little colonies of Roman Catholics, attracted to the court through the influence of the latter, have maintained a profession of Christianity which has often put our Protestantism to the blush. Amongst the mixed races dwelling in Gwalior Wheler found a warm welcome, and together with the natives, especially the soldiers, who were the nobility of that Mahratta court, they furnished a wide field for preaching and religious conversation. It was

here, too, that his first known convert amongst the natives heard from him the elementary knowledge of the gospel. This was a fine young man, who not long after—having followed Wheler to Agra, and obtained more full instruction—received baptism from one of the missionaries, and became a zealous preacher. Here, however, amidst a corrupt court and licentious soldiery, where mutiny was chronic, and traditions of their freebooting forefathers alone held in reverence, Wheler was "the voice of one crying in the wilderness," and the forerunner of those judgments by which their boasted lawlessness was so soon to be once and again chastised. Some of the Eurasians from Gwalior came to Agra after him for the sake of his instructions, and expressed themselves greatly benefited by the Christian fellowship and practical religion they there witnessed amongst the brethren. Like the Queen of Sheba, these simple-minded believers thought "the half had not been told them," and they now knew that Jesus was the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

Thus was a beginning made in "the regions beyond," where, as in several other places, Wheler laid the foundations and other men built thereon; and Christianity has now its church, its mission, and all the appurtenances thereof. The street was to be

built again and the wall, in troublous times, after British supremacy had been contested at the point of the bayonet, and Christianity itself had for a season been driven out with the utmost ignominy and violence.

Amongst those who owed their first religious life to this period of Wheler's labour, was the young orphan family of an Eurasian officer of a native state, which seemed, through the conversion of the elder brother after long and deep conviction, to have been brought as a household into the church which they still continue to adorn.

The result of Wheler's contest with the Government was widely felt, and many rejoiced in his success. It seemed as though he had broken the spell which had bound Christians, and that a glamour previously cast over them was now dissipated, and their hearts had leave to open under the blessed influence of Christianity. Hitherto believers had felt afraid to assert their rights as Christians and Britons, and the necessary result, as in every land where restraints are laid on the Word of God and its freest proclamation, was an uneasy conscience and gloom over men's spirits, damping every holy aspiration, and paralyzing every religious effort. Now all seemed to vie, like the first emancipated slaves of our colonies, in zeal for diffusing the glad tidings of

salvation. Parties of lay preachers, as in our own revival days, would go into the city of Agra, and, by singing and preaching, create an unprecedented sensation. "Wheler's Chapel," the first Protestant place of worship ever seen in the city of Agra, was erected soon after as a memorial of that blessed season.

> "Blessings abound where'er He reigns;
> The prisoner leaps to lose his chains,
> The weary find eternal rest,
> And all the sons of want are blest."

Agra became a centre of attraction to surrounding states, and many an embassy attracted thither, like the treasurer of Candace, they knew not exactly why, hearing of Wheler, sought his acquaintance, "to hear words whereby they and all their house might be saved." Even our own countrymen, coming on duty from neighbouring stations, were glad to have their faith thus confirmed; and one young soldier, "John Green,"* a faithful but solitary witness for Christ, at that time in the Horse Artillery at Muttra, not only enjoyed much refreshment to his soul by a visit and occasional correspondence, but sent a well-educated native inquirer, who professed to have desires after Christ through his instruction.

After Wheler's return from Gwalior, the 31th

* See tract by that title.

Native Infantry being ordered to Meerut, his stay in Agra was very short, only long enough to see his various plans and youthful institutions prosper, and to learn that the old set of European military was succeeded by a new one, with officers calculated to promote the good cause; and so, having seen the brethren, he "comforted them and departed." Thus Wheler entered on his next theatre of warfare in the early part of 1840. Concerning the scene of his recent labours we need not dilate, as his history, for yet another quarter of a century, will bring us back to Agra more than once, and prove that it was no superficial work he then accomplished, and the "revival," which owed so much of its power to his personal efforts, no temporary excitement; that whether it regards the individual results of his labours or the increased piety in the community, results had made it manifest that "his fruit should remain." Very interesting, too, were his efforts amongst the beggars, who collected at his house every Sunday, except in those stations, like Agra, where they had a poor-house. Wheler fed and instructed them, and they everywhere formed the most attentive audience of any. Solemnity and occasional deep emotion might be witnessed among them.

After the usual period of nearly three years at

Agra, the 34th Regiment was ordered to Moradabad, a quiet station in Rohilcund, where a colony descended from the Afghan invaders had ruled the province for many years, until dispossessed by the King of Oude, who, under protection of the British Government, inflicted frightful atrocities. The country had since then been made over to our Government, and here, amongst a race who had as Mohammedans the usual hatred to us, aggravated in this case by political wrongs, Wheler continued to make known the gospel. He had been superseded in the command of the 34th Regiment, probably a mark of displeasure for his opposition to the wishes of Government in regard to his preaching to the natives. The new commanding officer was a celebrated martinet, chosen, perhaps, to neutralize Wheler's influence. They got on, however, so amicably that Colonel —— lived with Wheler, and it was remarked how much influenced he became by the latter's example. Some years later, when Wheler's health so failed that the medical men insisted on the necessity of his leaving India, and going to the Cape of Good Hope for change of air, Colonel ——, knowing that he always spent all he had beyond his personal scanty expenses on religious objects, and that he had not the means of paying for the voyage, said

to him, "I know your circumstances, and the necessity for your going; I therefore request you will draw upon me for the expense of your three years' trip;" and Wheler accordingly did so.

From Moradabad, at the end of 1843, the 34th Regiment marched to Delhi, the hot-bed of Mohammedanism, where the titular emperor still maintained the shadow of a court, and enjoyed a license for luxury and empty pomp. Various demoralizing influences through mismanagement had weakened the tie betwixt the Sepoys and their officers in the 34th. Wheler, as a major and not in command, was destitute of regimental influence. The notorious unhealthiness of the Delhi cantonment completed the disorganization of the regiment, and when, in a month or two, they were ordered to Ferozepore, *en route* to Scinde, the picture presented by the line of march was most pitiable. Native carts were crowded with hospital patients or convalescents, and those compelled to march were many of them hardly able to crawl along. It was in this wretched condition they managed to reach Ferozepore. Wheler now again came into the command of the regiment, through the departure of Colonel —— on sick leave.

Scinde, but lately occupied by us as the result of the victories of Sir Charles Napier over the Ameers,

was a terror to Bengal Sepoys because of its deadly climate, and already several native regiments had mutinied through the misunderstanding that had occurred on matters of pay. Bengal Sepoys only agreeing to serve in the Company's territories, extra pay was given for a time on our occupying this province. The Ameers' territories being now annexed, this extra pay ceased, and orders were issued to be carefully explained to the Sepoys to that effect. To some regiments they were duly explained, but to some who were on the march thither they were not made known, so it was said, and the regiments mutinied when they found their pay mulcted, as they imagined, contrary to agreement. A distinguished colonel of a native regiment was on this account tried by a court-martial and dismissed the service.

On their arrival at Ferozepore, the 34th Regiment, still shattered by fever, came into contact with the mutinous regiments just returned from Scinde, and according to the invariable custom of native regiments when meeting, if only on line of march, they interchanged tidings of each others' recent station; "What's the water?" "What's the climate?" "What's the price of flour?" etc. Awful were the reports given of that grave of Sepoys, Scinde. Raking up, no doubt, in their conversation together every real or imagined grievance, regi-

mental tyranny, and neglect, with Government injustice and ill luck—that unpardonable sin in politics—no wonder if they persuaded each other that it was intended to destroy them. Here, in short, occurred the momentous event which, had the Government been wise, might have warned them in time of the great calamity of 1857. The 34th Regiment mutinied, and, more marvellous still, was disbanded without a word or symptom of disorder or resistance; though they continued to behave with the utmost propriety, obeying all orders as usual, and treating their officers with more than usual deference, but requiring satisfaction ere they would march to Scinde. Any one might have, as indeed many had already, foreseen the impending catastrophe of the "Bengal mutinies," for such events had once and again taken place with ever-increasing intensity of bitterness against the Government, until in 1857 that heterogeneous mass, the native army, was finally dissipated like chaff before the wind. The Sepoys occupied almost the position of our yeomanry of old; many being small landed proprietors, under effete native governments, served us to secure our influence and protect their rights at home. This fostered a spirit of independence and sensitiveness to injustice, especially in matters of pay, and when aggrieved or deprived of satisfaction

regarding their rights as a body, they "struck," just as our masons or carpenters do in Britain, and with as little sense of wrong in that course of seeking redress. We may safely say that the orders and regulations of the native army are their Magna Charta, and that any tampering with what they consider their rightful pay was with the Sepoy the case of "ship money," which will never want a Hampden or a Pym to denounce even to the death. Too well have our countrymen imbued these disciples with the principles of liberty and justice which built up the British Empire, for these men, who have never refused to follow their officers in the path of duty, to tamely suffer their dearest rights to be trampled on without a protest and resistance. The 34th did no more than the Highland regiments when, more than once, they refused to go abroad contrary to agreement. That Sepoys alone were not to blame was manifest when the entire European Bengal army mutinied in 1859, and the result was the "retreat of the ten thousand," who insisted on being sent home again, and gained their object.

Justice and propriety alike forbid our questioning the proceedings of the Governor-general or the Commander-in-chief at this stage and climax of events, but they were both new in their office,

and necessarily governed by the reports of those on the spot; and we may confidently say that had General Hearsay commanded the station of Ferozopore in 1844, and Wheler continued in command of the 34th, instead of being superseded by Colonel ——, they would have succeeded in this case as effectually as in 1857, of which last case we shall speak hereafter.

In short, whatever explanations were offered (and these regimental officers were too deeply attached to their men to spare any efforts in their power); whatever the influence of higher rank (and Sepoys are extremely susceptible to the personal exhortation of him in highest authority immediately over them)—the result was that the 34th were disbanded, having first been ordered to Meerut, a large station of European troops. As regards the effect on the European commissioned officers of the 34th, some from that time resigned the service for ever, and one Christian officer at least testified that it almost broke his heart. No one entering Meerut on that eventful morning would have supposed that anything unusual had happened. No stranger witnessing the parade drawn up, and seeing it dismissed with all the usual formalities, would have guessed its object or result. Yet in that peaceable manner was one of the best conducted regiments in the ser-

vice summarily extinguished, and a body of men, who had spent many of them the prime of their life with honour and credit in the East India Company's service, calmly submitted to be ruined as to their earthly prospects for ever.

To show how far Wheler's personal influence contributed to this forbearance on the part of the misguided Sepoys, the following fact may be mentioned. The night before the disbandment of the 34th, an intention now no secret, a rumour spread amongst them that it was designed they should be inveigled into a circle of European troops and artillery, and thus be destroyed. They were not without a precedent of such treatment of a native regiment a few years previously at Barrackpore. With the proverbial credulity of heathen this rumour was credited by the 34th. A panic ensued, and a message in dead of night came to Wheler that his regiment's lines were empty, and the 34th "kafoor ho gya," (volatilized)! Learning the route they had taken, he mounted his horse, galloped after them, and in the midst of the jungles did the solitary man visit this disorganized and incensed mass and plead for their return to duty, and ere morning dawned that same mass, now drawn up soldier-like under their veteran commander, were in their usual place on the general parade.

The Bishop (Daniel Wilson) used to say, "If every one of his countrymen was like Colonel Wheler, he would have ten thousand missionaries." Yes, and if every regiment had possessed such a commanding officer there would never have been a mutiny of the Bengal native army.

Had Wheler's evangelizing efforts amongst the Sepoys not been thwarted by his supercession from the command of the 34th, and had the full weight of the Government's influence not been exercised to neutralize his Christian efforts, that regiment at least would have been a bulwark of loyalty still, and might have contributed to turn the scale in the approaching crisis. Might we presume to scan this "frowning providence" to find "a smiling face," we would suggest that thus only could these poor heathen, halting between the two opinions—of the gospel proclaimed by Wheler, and the carnal policy of the Government with all their imposing prestige—escape the coming catastrophe now inevitable, and avoid the course of fearful crime awaiting the native army. Perhaps these misguided men of the 34th, in the more peaceful retirement and occupations of their native villages, whilst reflecting on the dreadful fate of their comrades, might recal the holy truths, and lay to heart the warnings they heard from his lips. Thus God once "re-

membered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt." It was also in this same Meerut, the scene of the 34th's immolation, that other sentence by the Supreme Government of India had been executed a few years before, when Naik Poorvodheen, also of a Sepoy regiment, was after due investigation by judicial forms, found guilty of having turned Christian, and accordingly removed as a dangerous element from the ranks of the native army.

Verily there is a solemn harmony in this grand march of retributive providence. The same key-note, then first struck, is again and again heard as the refrain is still prolonged, until the conclusion in the dreadful atrocities of 1857, these also commencing in the regiment of the preaching colonel, and bursting forth into full violence at the same station, Meerut, where the first Sepoy convert was degraded!

"Amidst their measured music no watchful ear can hear
God's voice amidst the garden. But hush! For He is here.
So soberly and softly the seasons tread their round,
So surely seeds of autumn in spring-time clothe the ground."

Wheler's testimony against ungodliness, so long maintained in spite of every variety of opposition, must at last prevail, and the seed sown by him "in

weakness" be "raised in power," when the voice of the nation echoing his sentiments demanded the extinction of the East India Company's Government, and the Bengal native army was in God's providence overthrown. "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations" (Isa. lxi. 11).

Had those most concerned duly weighed the events and marked the scenes transpiring in Meerut, it would have been well. The solemn, dignified demeanour of the 34th Sepoys during their so-called mutiny, and more especially at their dismissal, spoke loudly, and the precursors of national revolt have frequently carried less significance. We could say more, but on the principle of "*de mortuis nil nisi bonum*," we spare our reflections on the *late* Government. They might well bequeath their experience to their successors, and say with the dying Cardinal Wolsey, "Had I but served my God with half the zeal I served my king, He would not in my age have left me naked to my enemies."

Let *us* hereafter profit by their experience. We have passed through a Mutiny, let us *beware of a Revolution.*

Although the Sepoys of the 34th were dis-

persed, the European officers and sergeants, with the Christian Eurasian drummers, were still kept on the pay and strength of the army, and for two years remained unemployed at Meerut. Wheler must not suppose, however, his work at an end or his battle won. "The remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward." Before the Punjab had been annexed to our Eastern Empire, whilst our garrison held Lahore as a first-fruits of the victories of the Sutlej, one, though not the only testimony known in that city for Christ, was the Christian walk and regular family worship of a drummer of a native regiment. He was one of Wheler's little flock, transferred to this regiment after the 34th was disbanded, a pledge of that resurrection of the native army which is even now taking place, as the fruits of those faithful ones like Wheler who never ceased their labours, and who, through all its temporary madness, still believed God would "destroy it not, for a blessing was in it."

We find the following letter written at this period and in allusion to his experience:—

"MEERUT, *18th March*, 1816.

"I feel no doubt that whether in ill-health or suffering under any other trouble (as it may please Divine Providence to place us), that all must work

together for our good, both in this life and the one to come. Affliction is the furnace in which we must be purified, or our carnal flesh would never be mortified and subdued. We see how all this was exemplified in the Prodigal Son. He came out of the furnace with all the Christian graces shining within him, and I doubt not he considered that trouble he underwent as the greatest blessing that ever befel him, since it was the happy means of bringing him to his father. I may truly say that the three soverest trials I have undergone in my life—viz., firstly, my illness with the small-pox while at Saugor (it was there the seed was first sown in my heart); secondly, my agents failing, when I lost that which I held most dear to me; and now thirdly, the loss of my regiment—have one and all truly turned out mercies in disguise.

"The Lord, I am assured, has taken these from me, in order to make more room for Himself in my heart—

> "'Thrice happy loss which makes me see
> My happiness is all in Thee.'

In Him as my portion I possess more than all this vain world, or a thousand worlds besides, could give. There is no peace, joy, or love like his. These will support me under every trouble; and though the world and the flesh are daily warring against me,

yet He will give strength and grace to keep them under. The believer in Christ puts me in mind of a vessel which has to sail against a strong stream and tide in the midst of a river: it is the grace and strength of the Lord that enable him to resist all the stream of sin which is in the world and his own corrupt nature.

"I feel now quite indifferent whether they give me another regiment or not. I have all and everything I could wish in regard to this world. Whatever is best for me the Lord will appoint. May I only be resigned, submit to his will, and cast all my care for the future freely upon Him. In this state I am 'quiet from fear of evil.'

"Ever yours most affectionately,

"S. G. WHELER."

In the period of cessation from military employment, Wheler found ample field for his evangelistic ardour at Meerut, for notwithstanding the devoted zeal in former years of such labourers as the Rev. H. Fisher and Captain and Mrs. Sherwood, with peculiarly favourable temporal circumstances, the bishop had thus to lament, in 1844—"All is sinking into inanition; the chapel closed, the mission-house uninhabited, the committee desponding: . . . . no confirmation, no subscriptions, no audience, no

effect." Here again then was "the right man in the right place," and the little community of pious Europeans testified that Wheler, as usual, infused new life into their meetings and fresh hope into their hearts. The forerunner of that devoted missionary the Rev. Mr. Lamb, who came after him and built up the waste places of Zion so successfully for ten years, Wheler spent two years in preaching in the bazaars to the most depraved population in India, where the horrors of the Mutiny were already germinating in the union of European barrack debauchery with heathen ignorance and superstition.

But the bloody fields of the Sutlej compelled the Government to avail themselves once more of the military services of Wheler and his brother officers. The Bundelcund Legion having distinguished itself, was raised into a regular regiment as the new 34th, and Wheler put in command, in 1846. The local corps, having only two or three European officers, required all the additional ones then supplied from the late 34th to render them effective for the line. The new regiment had been ordered to Loodiana on the Sutlej, and thither it proceeded. Here the American missionaries being established in some force, and the language one new to Wheler, it is probable that he found sufficient employment with his new regiment to occupy

most of his time. He did not fail to establish cordial relations with this new branch of Christ's Church, as was his custom with all, whatever denomination they might belong to; and these brethren testify to the congenial intercourse they enjoyed and to the devotedness that characterized his conduct.

Wheler did not, however, neglect to proclaim in that city the glad tidings, for where there were many native soldiers and camp-followers Hindostani was always more or less understood. An opportunity was here afforded him of making acquaintance with two of the most warlike and interesting races of the north-west. Besides the Sikhs, the reformers of Hindooism, a tolerant race of Deists to whom the American mission was specially sent, and who had received from them the Bible in their vernacular, and a number of schools, also school-books and other literature, there was a colony of Afghans, with their refugee ex-king Shah Shujah, his son, and his followers and family. His introduction to these, as a race with whom he was destined to come in contact a few years later in Peshawur, proved an interesting passage in his experience.

The Afghans deserve a book to themselves, and we shall have to speak more fully hereafter regarding them. Their character presents a strong

contrast to the apathy, superstition, and formality of Hindostanees, but the former are far more intolerant. Wheler, according to custom, having one day engaged a group of them in conversation, a man who had been lazily dozing on his bed by the doorway hearing the expression "Son of God," which with Afghans, as with the Jews of old, is deemed rank blasphemy, started up as though for a fight, demanding who and what they meant. Wheler's calm dignity of manner, or perhaps the recollection of his living under the power of the infidel government, may have restrained the outburst, for the native listened at last to a declaration of God's Word, which even with *them* exercises irresistible influence.

In Loodiana Wheler would also meet a colony of Cashmerian refugees from the tyranny and extortion of a Hindoo ruler, Golab Sing. These Mohammedans were too glad to avail themselves of British toleration, where they could sell their goods, the inimitable shawls, without taxation, and build their temples and kill beef without danger to their lives; and they did not always refuse to hear the gospel or to send their children to be taught its holy doctrines.

Indeed, so powerful was the impression made by the American missionaries, and so great was the sense of their devotedness and faith, that when on two different occasions hostile armies—first the

Sikh army in the Sutlej campaign, and secondly the mutinous Sepoy regiments in 1857—took possession of the place, the mission premises and residents escaped injury, except from the robbery of their stores on the latter occasion, and the burning of the printing press, etc., which was done by some jail-birds released by the rioters from prison.

Wheler not being required here, his stay was short, and in 1847 he again finds himself returning to Agra, the regiment being ordered there, thus again remarkably avoiding the slaughter and horrors of the second Sikh war, 1848-9, as he had the first in 1845-6. Wheler was never of those who delight in war, and most remarkably did the Lord fulfil in his case Psalm xci. Wars and rumours of war were the order of the day, and whilst one Asiatic kingdom after another was rising in defiance and opposition to the British rule, only to be shattered in battle and engulphed by annexation, he continued his peaceful proclamations to all parties alike, God's loud *Amen* of judgment endorsing his warning call to repentance. A thousand fell at his side, and ten thousand at his right hand, but destruction came not nigh him. Only once was his regiment in the field, in 1851-2, and then hardly a shot was fired.

CHAPTER V.

On Wheler's return with the new 34th Regiment to Agra, he found a wonderful change in outward things since he was last there in 1840. Everything, from "the grass that groweth" to the buildings, seems, like man himself, to spring up with marvellous rapidity in the East; and where he had left a wide barren plain of ruins intersected with a labyrinth of ravines, he now found roads and avenues of shady trees running amidst gardens and villas, each denomination having established itself with its church and other institutions for the external ornament and spiritual renovation of the place. The Government had made Agra the head-quarters of its fiscal, judicial, and criminal courts, bringing in a large and influential community of its clerks and other uncovenanted servants, who, mostly Eurasian, have a deep interest in the country, with all the talent and principle of the European race.

The Eurasians are much engaged in mercantile pursuits, and naturally strongly attached to the

land of their birth, they are specially qualified to establish those institutions of learning, trade, and civilization which alone can raise their country. As permanent residents, also, they have a greater hold on the locality they inhabit, and Agra owes to this important class much of the superiority which has made it like an European city, and a close follower in the wake of the Presidency capitals. Like the Hobabs and Kenites, the Ruths and Bathshebas of old, they manifest Jehovah's sovereignty, and show that He is their Father, though Abraham be ignorant of them and Israel acknowledge them not. Being very influential in religious movements, they had given a great impetus to the tender plant which Wheler and his little band of like-minded men had reared in 1838-9. Better than all, a goodly band of missionaries were engaged in all their labours of love, by which, through their respective agencies of schools, colleges, preaching, and translation, etc., India is being evangelized. The Hon. James Thomason, now become Lieutenant-governor, with his talented and pious secretary, was devising those grand schemes for the temporal and intellectual improvement of the country, which have made the Ganges Canal and the village schools of the North-west his lasting monument; so that even above all the achievements since that time, Agra still stands

pre-eminent for her Thomason and his North-west Bible Society, etc.

It might appear that, with such a galaxy of leading characters, Wheler was out of his sphere at Agra, nor was he to be long in it; but whilst thus revisiting the scene of former labours, he shared most enthusiastically in everything that was being carried on by others, and expressed his opinion that he never witnessed a more satisfactory work. Finding a military chaplain like-minded in the Rev. Mr. Norgate, like David and Jonathan they carried all before them, and the revival then enjoyed in H.M. 24th Regiment will never be forgotten. Thus he writes so late as 1862: "You refer often to what took place at Agra when we were there in 1838-9, but I saw a much more glorious work the second time I was there in 1848, when the Rev. Mr. Norgate was chaplain to the station. He was indeed the man for the European soldiers. I have never seen his like since. I am sure I have never profited under any one as I did when working together with him among the soldiers of the 24th Regiment."

So arduous were the efforts involved in setting forth a Saviour to poor awakened sinners, and directing their longing eyes to the great salvation, that two chaplains were permanently laid aside in succession at the work, and Wheler also had so severe an illness

that he was ordered by the doctors to the Cape for two or three years. The bulletins from his beloved flock ministered comfort to the Rev. Mr. Norgate on his death-bed, a few months later, at the hill station of Subathoo, where, persisting in his labours amongst the numerous European soldiers who were destitute and in great disorder from various unavoidable contingencies, he wore himself out. He used to say of Wheler (for betwixt the two there was strong mutual admiration), "Oh, that is a noble Christian! I never dared hope to attain to the measure of his stature." And when they sent him reports of increased success through his successor's labours, he used sportively to exclaim, "There's —— standing like Absalom at the king's gate, and stealing the hearts of the men of Israel."

To hear each of these men describe that glorious work of grace, it would be thought that each considered the other the chief instrument, so truly did "each esteem the other better than himself." Unfortunately no record has been preserved of that blessed season, except in the hearts of those who participated in it. The 24th Regiment was itself soon afterwards plunged into all the bloody work of the second Sikh campaign, and history has testified that, as of yore, those soldiers eminent in godliness were equally distinguished for martial prowess.

Whilst in the previous week the camp of the 24th was like a church, in which officers of rank were glad to enjoy the spiritual feast, on the fearful day of Chillianwallah they carried all before them, leaving, however, half of their number stretched on the field, 23 officers and 459 men being killed or wounded. It was to this regiment those engaged in establishing the first City Mission in India looked for their agents, and the success of the Calcutta City Mission, in connection with the efficient labours of the devoted Leighton, who left his body in the breach, and the continued perseverance of his comrades still on the field, testify to the result.

Although eminently the "Sepoy apostle," Wheler had a strong feeling towards his countrymen, and whenever he came where there was a European regiment, his first efforts were directed to them, and he always expressed the great stimulus and refreshment he found this to his own soul. Like Paul, seeing the frequent neglect of the souls of our own countrymen in India, and the fearful consequences of Government "framing iniquity by a law," in the sanction they gave to fornication and drunkenness, he "had great heaviness and continual sorrow in heart for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh." His remark was that Government having conquered the country through native soldiers, the

Church should have done likewise. He used to quote Dr. Arnold's remark to a missionary going to India: "So you are going to seek the conversion of the natives; well, begin with your own countrymen there." Wheler's opinion was, that if missionary societies had thus begun, they would have had officers to their army through whom, as with the Sepoy army, they might have organized an irresistible force, before which Mohammedanism and Hindooism would have fled like chaff before the wind. There is no doubt but that hitherto the great obstruction to the conversion of the heathen has been the ungodliness of the European. And as Moses opened his miraculous mission by the previous conversion of his countrymen (Ex. iv. 31), and our Lord commissioned his apostles to go first "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," we cannot expect that God will "do many mighty works" amidst the heathen, with a large community of professing Christians allowed to remain uncared for, and practically denying all that is preached.

Wheler's "heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel was that they might be saved," and, like Paul, he preached "to the Jew first." He, moreover, testified to the success of this mode of procedure; for if the numbers of his converts in barracks was not large on all occasions, he considered that

one converted soldier there was a mighty lever to move all around, and that there was no college in the world like the army for training workmen for missions to the heathen. He was therefore opposed, as he showed by his own practice, to men leaving the army unless for wider spheres of Christian usefulness in India. He regarded pious soldiers as "beaten oil for the sanctuary," and whilst ready to promote that excellent society which sends Scripture-readers into the regiments, thought that converted soldiers would be able to secure ample blessing by simply looking to the Lord, though destitute of churches, chaplains, and Scripture-readers. He expected to see greater triumphs of grace through this means than even by more organized establishments, especially if these first acted as pioneers, and Government acted as nursing-fathers, instead of promoting drunkenness by those hells-on-earth, the canteens, etc. Wheler used to quote Ezekiel xxxvi. verse 23 to the end, as his ground of hope and for the mode of accomplishment, saying, "Have we not profaned his holy name amongst the natives? Truly this is a reproach wherever an European regiment has been quartered. How often, when speaking to them, have they turned round and said, 'You had better go and preach to your own people, for we see vices com-

mitted amongst them which we should be ashamed to commit ourselves.' Too true, indeed, as you well know!"

Wheler's farewell words to the pious soldiers of H.M. 24th Regiment, on his leaving them through sickness to proceed to the Cape in 1818, and republished as a tract from the *Calcutta Christian Intelligencer*, Jan., 1859, may serve as a sample of his religious teaching to European soldiers. The 24th Regiment was then about to march on the second Sikh campaign:—

"My Brethren in Christ,—I heartily thank you for your letter to me, and the many kind expressions mentioned therein. I shall ever consider it a most fortunate circumstance that the Lord permitted me to pass so many evenings with you in the chapel where we so often bent the knee together in prayer, etc., etc. To me those most imperfect services were very profitable, and became a delightful exercise, rendering myself better acquainted with the word and doctrines of Scripture; as the proverb says, 'He that watereth shall be watered.' I may truly say that my grand object in these imperfect exhortations to you was to keep you close to Christ, to lead you to embrace Him as the Rock, on which all your hope is built. Oh, my friends, endeavour

above all to realize a grateful sense of his infinite love towards you for his work of salvation to your souls. Recollect who He is, and what you are; recollect what He has saved you from, and to what He has exalted you; trust and rely on Him for all your sins having been entirely forgiven, and for being reconciled to the Father; daily seek by earnest prayer his Spirit's grace to quicken and stimulate you on your road to Zion, and to enable you to meet every difficulty, both from the world, the flesh, and the devil.

"Let me warn you to be now more on the watch than ever, for the din, bustle, and excitement of a camp, if not guarded against, will draw your attention from heavenly things; the devil will endeavour to sift you as wheat now that you will be separated from your pastor and the public ordinances of religion. Let him not get any advantage over you, but keep close, 'not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together,' whether in camp, in the field, in cantonment, or wheresoever Divine Providence may lead you. The sergeants who are religious will, I sincerely hope, open their tents for prayer and religious meetings, where service can be quietly conducted; and I trust they will set a good example to their younger brethren in this respect, and endeavour to keep harmony,

peace, and good-will existing amongst the flock. My dear fellow-soldiers in Christ, I call upon each of you to suppress all bitterness, anger, and ill-will towards each other, and to recollect you are all of one family, all enlisted under the same banner, all animated by the same spirit, and all have to fight against one common enemy, the devil. Union, you know, is strength; therefore I exhort you to be careful to walk in love, and eschew everything likely to injure you in this respect. I would have come down to see you once more and take a personal farewell of you all, but in consequence of my foot being so bad I cannot have that pleasure; I must therefore be contented with wishing you a hearty farewell, which I do from the bottom of my heart. May God Almighty bless you all, keep you steadfast, and preserve you under the shadow of his wings till *that* day, when I trust we shall ALL meet in those heavenly mansions, and unite together with the holy angels in blessing and praising Him before his throne of glory to an endless eternity. Amen and amen.

"S. G. WHELER,
"34th Regiment."

The next three years spent by Wheler at the Cape must be left almost a blank in these pages.

We are at liberty to suppose that, as in the case of most sick officers who go there to recruit from the effects of his long residence in the tropics, he made it a holiday—his only one during nearly fifty years. When we consider the labours that preceded it, as well as those awaiting him, it was well earned and much needed. Yet even here we get stray indications that the time was not merely spent as a pleasure trip, or without abiding fruit. Rumours have reached us from the Western Isles and other localities far north, of a remarkable colonel from India, named "Wheler," who awakened deep convictions in people at the Cape in 1849. Those who met him again soon after his return to India could not fail to observe the maturity of his graces, his deeper spirituality and uniform heavenly-mindedness, with a peculiar combination of power and gentleness accompanying his words; and if we are to be guided by his own statements, and judge by the religious views he thenceforth professed, there must have been a crisis in his religious character and principles during those three years, though of the agency which had been employed we have no information.

Wheler, from his natural disposition, which was not a studious one, as well as from his incomplete education and unsettled life as a marching subaltern

amongst the heathen, was probably somewhat defective in the theological training deemed requisite in a preacher. Naturally more after the type of Cyprian than of Augustine, more practical than reflective, the mass of superstition, irreligion, and vice which encompassed his path led him to dealing with first principles, and rough-hewing in the quarry, rather than with building up in more disciplining truth. He was just the instrument suited to the then state of the army, European and native. He had hitherto been a strict churchman, even to confining himself in devotion and public ministrations among his countrymen and in the church to printed forms and discourses. He had been but slightly, if at all, personally acquainted with missionaries or those experienced in more regular ministrations. With all his advantages as a self-taught man, guided by the Word of God alone in his evangelistic labours, he was still ignorant of the more enlightened freedom enjoyed by those deeper taught in the doctrines and past history of Christianity, and up to this time had a somewhat superficial acquaintance with the Bible itself. He had always been a pioneer in advance of all constituted religious agencies of the higher order, with little leisure, even if inclined, to cultivate his own vineyard in these things, and now that he was for the first time re-

leased from pressing duties and opportunities for more active employment, through the inaction of a long sea voyage and lingering sickness, he doubtless would with profit review his own character and work. On arriving at the Cape, the field of some of our most effective missions, and perhaps becoming intimate with some of its veteran labourers, one may imagine how a mind like his, sensitive to a degree of his own deficiencies, and ready to take instruction from any of God's true servants, would feel conscious of his defects and avail himself of the opportunity.

It would appear to have been the Wesleyan missionaries with whom Wheler chiefly fraternized at the Cape, and through whom he experienced what he described as a second conversion. This hardly appeared in any essential article of doctrine, but if at all, in a fuller manifestation of Christ in his ministry and character. He certainly from this time possessed a strong belief in Christian perfection as understood by Wesleyans, and was very partial to some of their writings. It is not clear, however, whether the Calvinistic views he once held were relinquished: his conversation, although it was most unreserved on experimental religion, hardly enabled one to judge. He was averse to controversy, and greatly preferred to dwell on those cardinal truths concerning which all Christians are

"perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment." Doubtless he had much sympathy with Wesleyan brethren, and would thus among them be probably drawn into more decided expression of his views on some points than he would have been with other denominations less disposed to receive them. Our Wesleyan brethren may certainly boast in his case of having "ten parts in David." He warmly co-operated with them and highly "esteemed them for their work's sake," and could his large heart have been compressed anyhow into a denomination, it would have assumed the Wesleyan form. Thus he writes from Agra, 1862:—"I very much like the little book you sent out to me headed, 'Some account of the recent "Revivals" in the North of England and Glasgow, by Mrs. Palmer.' If you can, I would wish you to send me out twenty copies more, as I think it is a work likely to stir up the missionaries and others who are engaged in the work of the Lord, that little book containing the same doctrine which you may recollect I endeavoured to impress you with when I was with you at Attock in 1852, having a work of the same kind called 'Life of Mrs. Rogers,' but which I think you did not at that time admire. By God's blessing, it was that work more than anything else which influenced me to labour amongst the Mo-

hammedans of Peshawur. The other little book, 'Weighty Words,' I have almost got through, having sent copies to different individuals. I hope by the blessing of God they may prove to many as arrows sharpened by the Spirit."

From this period Wheler's mind was deeply set on experiencing growth in grace and holiness of life, becoming more and more conscious of the vital difference between being saved, and being "fruitful in every good work," through a closer conformity to Christ and ever-increasing attainments of heart-experience and Christian walk and conversation. This was manifested in much self-denial, besides a degree of what sometimes appeared to his friends unnecessary self-reproach and dissatisfaction with his own state of soul. It was also regretted that he did not give himself greater indulgence in those things required by "his often infirmities," although subsequent to this illness, which the medical men attributed to his so-called austerities, he did "take a little wine."

As to his favourite authors he writes: "Let me recommend to you the 'Life of the Rev. W. Bramwell;' it was put into my hands the other day by a lady. Also the 'Life of Madame Guion.' These works have a fulness of experimental religion which I have seldom witnessed in others." He also

delighted in such works as "The Memoir of the Countess of Huntingdon," wherein the more controversial points are held in abeyance.

Wheler had been accustomed to describe the position of the Christian Church as one of unlimited privilege, referring all the glowing Old Testament prophecies of the millennium to our times. He said we lived under the dispensation of the Spirit, whilst the Jews had only lived under the promise of it. And that there was no limit to the power obtainable and the triumphs to be expected. But after his return from the Cape, one effect of his change of sentiments was a more chastened view of missionary prospects, regarding which he formerly looked forward with the most glowing anticipations to speedy and universal triumphs of the gospel, at least in India. Having, it seems, got more experience since regarding "Old Adam and Young Melancthon," his hopes were very considerably modified. For a time, at least, he seems to have experienced quite a reaction of feeling towards churches and missionaries, through becoming acquainted with some writings of the "Plymouth Brethren," which commended themselves to his judgment and feelings. He came to the conclusion that his former expectations were not warranted by Scripture, and he seems to have passed under a

cloud of temporary alienation from the missionary societies, writing to some of his old friends connected with them in a harsh strain. He felt very much the desertion of a mission in Eastern Bengal, which he was mainly instrumental in establishing, and which was given up on the death of the missionary (Dr. Haberlin) engaged in it. Perhaps a cloud of unbelief had enveloped him, like that which covered Elijah under the juniper tree, but it all vanished amidst the radiance of the setting sun, as his renewed subscriptions to missions and his last bequest, dividing his scanty personal possessions amongst the different societies, fully testified. During his last three years, when retired from active life in the army, his favourite resort was among the Baptist missionaries at Agra. On the present occasion he found the true remedy for his doubts and discouragements in returning to the field of action, and once more displaying the banner of salvation in the fore-front of the battle.

It were easy now to criticize some of Wheler's sentiments, as village politicians do the proceedings of a general in the field. He wrote and spoke from the heat of the conflict and under the inspiration of a faith that never allowed him to hesitate at any call of duty, or swerve from any sense of personal danger, far less esteem his own doings worth men-

tion. It is but right, however, to give his own words, that his often-declared sentiments during several years may be understood, and the more so as on a subsequent occasion he acknowledged having spoken too severely. This letter too, as being written when the Mutiny was on the point of breaking out, is significant, when we connect the solemn words of the Psalmist, "By terrible things in righteousness hast Thou answered us," with Wheler's repeated exhortation as to the need of more wrestling and intercessory prayer.

"BARRACKPORE, *January* 20, 1857.

"I had been long expecting a letter from you, when at last yours of the 8th of November last came to hand. From what you say in your letter we shall not see you again in India, I imagine. It little matters, I think, where we are, for there is a work of God we have to do, whether at home or abroad: that work, believe me, must first commence in ourselves. The baptism of the Spirit by fire is what, I fear, few have experienced, even those who stand (in the view of the Church) at the top of the list; for we are all satisfied and resting in justification or pardon, and remission of sins, instead of hungering and thirsting after that purity of heart, holiness, and that perfect love of o d which the Lord has promised to those who seek it by faith. In other words,

we are satisfied with a mixed love, a partial crucifixion of the flesh, instead of a dying unto sin, perfect love, and a thorough crucifixion of the flesh. Believe me, my dear ——, we have yet to go through the death of the flesh to come out of the miry clay (flesh and carnality); or in other words, to crucify that fearful 'self' which is always urging one to indulge and gratify it in every way, to please it by getting praise and flattery from our religious friends. For instance, how gratifying to hear people applaud you at religious meetings, and to see your name and speech brought prominently forward! Yes, Satan, depend upon it, will mar the work if he can, and therefore the necessity for the most humbling views of ourself.

"It is this enemy which appears to me to be ruining the missionaries and all missionary work. Writing reports of their own doings is, I think, one of the greatest and strongest temptations you could place before them; for knowing they are writing for the eye of the public, who, they know and feel, must give praise or censure, 'self' is sure to step in and urge them to write in order to please the world, and so attain its praise and also its money. When we thus act there can be no room for faith: all dependence is upon the world; for instead of looking to the Lord to send the means,

we set God aside and look wholly to man. I have long thought that we must have men of a much superior stamp or standard—I mean of course in a spiritual sense (not intellectually)—to do the work of the Lord in this and other countries, men full of the Spirit—a partial conversion, which they all have, will not do—but men who have undergone much experimental religion, well chastened, crucified with regard to 'self,' full of the love of God and his Spirit; men always wrestling with God in prayer for the Spirit, for 'the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence' for this gift; men who feel they have not to give account to man by 'Reports,' etc., but who feel they are solely responsible to God, who 'saluto no man by the way,' but act independently of man altogether, or their flight will be heavy like that of the fowl, instead of resembling the eagle aloft soaring freely in the skies.

"For my part I have no dependence on your missionary meetings. That kind of excitement, believe me, which generally pervades those meetings, emanates not from the Spirit; but on the contrary savours much of the world. They put me in mind of the seed which fell on stony ground; it is received with 'joy' or excitement, and instead of taking root downwards in the vitals, it quickly springs up into the head, and becomes

showy, everything to be seen and applauded (published in all the papers); whereas it should be humble and silent; no trumpeting that they may receive glory and praise of men, but on the contrary, so secret that if possible the left hand should not know what the right is about. Judge generally which is right and most pleasing to God. When meetings of the kind do take place, it would be a good plan to set apart one day or so especially for prayer and fasting; and only those people should attend—I mean as speakers—who did observe that day: by so doing the meetings would be attended by a solemnity and humble awe which would be more likely to bring a blessing upon them from above. I have been told they are, on the contrary, attended with much clapping, and sometimes cheering, which surely cannot but be displeasing in the sight of God.

"It has been my belief for some years, as you well know, that for preaching the gospel in this and other countries, they must be men of real faith, gifted with the spirit of the martyrs, who come forth in that capacity. For my part I feel nothing will do but constant prayer. We should endeavour to get up to that mark—'Pray always,' 'pray without ceasing.' There appears to me an immense fulness ready to be poured out from above upon those who will wrestle for it by constant prayer,—such

fulness of love, and joy, and peace, as passes all understanding. Let us open our mouths wide for this, and the Lord will fill us according to his promise. Then the preaching will go forth, not in man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and with power, carrying conviction to all around. Now it is all man's wisdom; the intellect, the letter —not the spirit; and the consequence is no blessing attends the work. One missionary full of God's Spirit, preaching the Word, would do more, I am persuaded, for the glory of God and salvation of souls, than all the missionaries now in the country. . . . . The fact is that wrestling prayer and fasting are too much neglected, and therefore we have more of the head than the heart. Look at Acts vi. 4. How cautious even the apostles were on this point, notwithstanding they had more of the power of the Spirit than any. I must bring his to a conclusion. This climate agrees with my health better than the up-country provinces. . . . . May the Lord be with you and bless you abundantly; let us wrestle much in prayer, and our words will be attended with power. The world must be made sick to feel their want of Christ. This principle in preaching I think is much neglected, and therefore our leanness.—Believe me, affectionately yours,

"S. G. WHELER."

Runjeet Singh's enterprising French officers, and held after many a bloody field had been won by the Sikhs over the Mohammedans. It fell into our hands on the downfall of the Sikh kingdom after the victory of Goojerat in 1849. As the gateway and high-road to the Mohammedan empires of Central Asia, its importance politically, commercially, and religiously, is inestimable, or the high price at which we continue to hold it could hardly be justified. What with the unhealthiness of the climate, and perpetual fighting with the independent states around in the effort to repress their incessant raids and intrigues, it has taxed the Government to the utmost, and they have had to call to their aid the most distinguished generals and statesmen, amongst them Lord Clyde and Sir C. Napier, Nicholson, the Lawrences, and Sir H. B. Edwardes; and security has hardly been purchased, though the loss of life has been greater than in any other station. Yet God has planted a very paradise for beauty and salubrity in the neighbourhood of this trying position; and as the healing mangrove is always found near the deadly manchineel, so here "the bane and antidote are both before them." The Valley of Cashmere is sufficiently near to Peshawur to enable our countrymen to enjoy to perfection their national tastes for field sports and travelling. There

the debilitated invalid, amidst the familiar productions of his native land, soon rallies his spirits, and it is usually his own fault if he does not recover his health.

As to the people of Peshawur, they differ nearly as widely from the Hindostanees as from us: a Yorkshire farmer does not differ more from the Neapolitan lazzarone. Considering themselves still of the race which has so often conquered India, and given imperial dynasties to the throne of Delhi, and, moreover, not forgetting that they succeeded on a late occasion in driving us out of Cabul, they still regard themselves as part and parcel of an unconquered kingdom, and quite our equals in military prowess and independence, the only objects of consideration in their esteem. Bigoted as they are to Mohammedanism, refusing to acknowledge the Hindostanee followers of the Prophet as among the faithful, or even to intermarry with them, their faith is rather a political than a religious institution, and the sword alone is regarded as the exponent of its doctrines. They have, therefore, a kind of fellow-feeling with us, not unmixed with admiration of our success over their hereditary enemies, the idolaters of India; and this, with a just sense of our honesty and high pay, attracts many of these born soldiers to serve in our ranks. Their own restless spirit

and enterprise forces many from the barren hills of Afghanistan to seek their living in various other spheres of mercantile and menial employment under our Government, in spite of all the denunciations of their priests and the policy of their rulers. Although their jealousy still excludes the missionary from their country, they cannot prevent their people from coming to the missionary, and thus the truth must long ago have been leavening many a wild region of Central Asia. If no European footsteps are allowed to thread its terrible defiles, yet in one instance at least, a second generation of their race is even now in our service, after having been trained in Britain under its choicest Christian privileges;* and individuals also, who cast in their lot with the British during the military occupation of Afghanistan, and became refugees amongst us when we gave it up, have embraced Christianity and preached it faithfully unto death.

The Afghans around Peshawur, under the iron yoke of the French officer Avitabile, were especially noted for their fierce, intractable character. They fancied that to kill a Kaffir† procured their immunity for a lifetime of crime, and so superstitious were

* An Afghan lady, married to an English officer, at his death educated her sons in Britain, and procured for them commissions in British regiments.

† Any one who was not a Mahommedan.

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they that some of them would, it is said, consecrate their holy places with the blood of their priests, as they certainly did the courts of justice with the blood of their magistrates. The palm trees of the city used, in the time of Sikh government, to be festooned by a daily supply of robbers' heads, and a murder a day was the average in the first years of our occupation.

Here then, in 1851-2, during the heat of our struggle to establish some degree of law and order, and security for life and property, whilst Lord Clyde (then Sir Colin Campbell), at the head of the greater portion of the Peshawur troops, was out on an expedition against the tribes of the Swat Valley, Wheler arrived to assume command of his regiment, and temporarily, in Sir Colin Campbell's absence, of the station. This was in daily danger of attack by the mountaineers, who threatened to double round Sir Colin Campbell's flank at night and burn the cantonment, etc. With double sentries all round the station, who even then were often cut off at night, their arms and horses carried off—with the houses only safe by payment of black mail to mountaineers who acted as watchmen, officers being prohibited from going abroad without arms, and attending their mess under an escort—Wheler confessed he never felt more helpless, except under the

refuge of "the everlasting arms," to which he daily and hourly had to flee for refuge.

With the conviction that there was but ONE REMEDY for all these atrocities, some officers had already planned a mission for the Valley; the late Captain Douglas, of the 60th Rifles, then fighting with the mountaineers, was a prominent party in proposing this. A considerable sum had been raised, and an invitation sent to Scotland for missionaries; but the time was not come, and there was no response to that offer. The political authorities at that period were hostile, prohibiting any missionary from crossing the Indus. Other plans for preaching and for giving the Bible to these desperate characters were mooted, but *who was to do the work?*

With apparent recklessness Wheler, to the amusement of officers and the astonishment of the natives, went into the Plaza of Peshawur city, amongst its motley assemblage of 60,000 Hindoos, Jews, Arabs, Cabulees, Candaharees, Cashmerees, etc.—a very Pentecostal collection, except for the opposite spirit pervading them—and there raising the banner of salvation, "preached Christ to them." The singularity of the thing in this place arrested attention, and the curiosity of the multitude prevailed for a time over their bigotry. He had large audiences, and was listened to most attentively; but so soon as

the idea became current that he was preaching that truth, as odious to the Afghans as to Jews of old, that "Jesus is the Son of God," then the shout of blasphemy was raised; and a mob in Peshawur shouting in the cause of their faith is a sound unequalled in any other part of the world. The roar of the ocean lashed by the tempest on a rock-bound coast comes nearest to it. Their features, too, were so fierce that one would imagine everything would be swept away by their fury, as they all with one voice, for the space of two hours, cry out, "Allah-l-Allah, Mahmoud rassool Allah," "There is but one God and Mahomet is his prophet." There Wheler stood beneath the pelting, pitiless blast, and at length his mild dignity of expression and calm persuasion prevailed, and he obtained a hearing. The venerable Colonel was permitted to preach again and again, though not without occasional squalls, and amidst dire threats of enemies, kindly remonstrances of friends confidentially warning him of plans to assassinate him, and harder still, the contempt of some of the officers and authorities. Wheler used to confess he never passed through such an ordeal, or felt his life hanging by such a thread, and as he returned day by day to his post, deeply revolved the consequences, and "counted the cost." No man, however, was per-

mitted to set on him to hurt him, and this continued for the space of two years, so that all they which dwelt in that region of Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, and that where no one before durst in public question the divinity of the Koran or the mission of Mahomet.

Nor was it in vain, as might well be supposed: not a few would come privately and consult Wheler, expressing their delight in what they had heard, and asking for fuller instruction. Amongst those who often listened to him was a remarkable character, once notorious as a robber amongst robbers, the watchword of whose tribe was,

> "Wouldst thou win a Khuttuck maid?
> Show some blood upon your blade;"

whose mother had prayed at his birth that he might be a successful riever. He too, attracted by something of kindred spirit in the new rulers, had taken service in that distinguished regiment, raised for employing such restless spirits —"the Guides." Doubtless, he admired Wheler's "pluck," and he did not scruple to take his side against the empty-headed priests, when . . their folly and their inability to answer the Colon .

As a non-commissioned officer in our service, and naturally a man of great intelligence, energy, and independence of mind, he frequently sought for

conversation with Wheler. He read the "Mizan al Hak" of Dr. Pfander, that hammer of Mohammedanism, and soon perceived where the truth lay. He became a determined foe of priestcraft, and as great an ally of Wheler as he was already of the British, delighting to confound the famous Peshawur Moollahs by most damaging attacks on Mohammedanism, and by those unanswerable "das sowal aur jowab" (ten questions and answers) circulated by a native in a tract. This fine soldier has since been baptized at Peshawur, and for his gallantry at the siege of Delhi, whither his regiment was urgently despatched, he received a commission. Like his first teacher, whose spirit and determination he imbibed, he continues a zealous defender of the truth against all comers. Once when in a boat with his comrades descending the dangerous rapids of the Indus, whilst the rest at the critical moment were appealing to the tutelary saint of the locality, Dilawur Khan called out very earnestly, "Ah, Wheler Sahib; ah, Wheler Sahib!" They began to reproach him for his profanity. "Why," he said, "you call on a dead saint, why should not I call on a living one?"

Wheler possessed a "meekness of wisdom" that invariably disarmed opposition. It is a testimony to his superiority in this respect that when two other Christian officers, soon after his departure from

Peshawur, sought to follow his example by at least accompanying a native preacher to the city, it created such a tumult that they had to escape by the aid of the police.

On one occasion Wheler, being attacked by the Peshawur fever, had to visit Attock for change of air, and whilst he was there, Dilawur Khan was passing through, with "the Guides" and Colonel Mackeson, to attack that nest of freebooters, since too well known in the last bloody affair of Sitana. He came to Wheler's tent with another native officer, and for hours carried on a deeply-interesting discussion on Christianity, seeming to consider the triumph of the gospel as much a matter of fact as the success of his expedition against the Black Mountain. Dilawur, at a later date, extended the protection of his broad shoulders to another young soldier of "the Guides" who had embraced the truth,* receiving him into his tent, and holding daily worship with him; thus fostering the tender plant against the rough usage that must be expected by a so-called apostate, whether in the barracks of European or native soldiers, amongst Protestants, Romanists, or Mohammedans. Thus was "the Guides" the first regiment to tolerate native con-

* Fazl Hak, who has since performed eminent services for Christ in the "regions beyond."

verts to Christianity, and God honoured it accordingly.

Colonel Wheler was in spirit a thorough soldier, and suited to be a missionary to soldiers; and his converts were imbued with the same dauntlessness. Another of his spiritual children, Willayut Ali, of the Delhi Baptist Mission, stood firm at his post through all the horrors of the Delhi massacre; and though entreated by those willing to save his life to recant, rejected every temptation to do so, and, surrounded by his wife and little children, sealed his testimony with his blood. Wheler's Christianity thus evidenced its Divine original as "a tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself."

It was not mere manliness and physical courage in Wheler's case; no one could be more decided in his opinions, or oppose more resolutely what he considered contrary to the will of God. Although on very friendly terms with Sir Colin Campbell, his military superior in Peshawur, yet he most determinedly withstood this old soldier on one occasion. Wheler, being in command of the station during Sir Colin's absence in the field, was expected to issue the customary order for tents being supplied for the worship of the Roman Catholics. This Wheler positively declined doing, and Sir Colin had to come back to the station and issue the order himself.

Wheler, according to his wont, visited the poor sick and dying soldiers in the military hospitals, which, in a large and sickly station, afforded abundant employment. As yet there was no church, and occasionally no chaplain, and, although some ladies complained that he secluded himself too much, depriving them of the privilege of his society, his time was fully engaged, even above his strength, in the more urgent calls made upon him. Wheler was too well aware how much his power for work depended on daily grace received from on high, to neglect spending much time in secret communion with God. He took part in the weekly Bible-readings held, as is customary in India, from house to house amongst officers and their families. His help here would be highly valued, and his own spirit refreshed, under the pressure of the daily conflict he was sustaining with the Mohammedans, to say nothing of "the like sufferings he endured of his own countrymen."

Amongst the other important enterprises he engaged in, not the least interesting was that of circulating the Persian Bible in "the regions beyond;" Persian being the Court language of Afghanistan, and generally understood by the upper classes, as French used to be throughout Europe. A native Christian was procured from the American

missionaries of Loodiana, who, joining himself to a party of merchants, succeeded in making his way into Cabul with his precious load; but before he had been there many days, and ere his books were introduced amongst the people, the wily Dost Mohammed had discovered him, and put him in prison. No harm, however, was done to him, and, all honour to the gallant old Ameer, he was carefully conveyed back to our authorities at Peshawur, being deported as contraband! But the Bibles? They were not returned nor ill-treated; the Ameer distributed them in open durbar to his followers and nobles. This, too, was not without significance when we remember that the Ameer Dost Mohammed had been some years our prisoner in Hindostan, and that even when his son Akhbar Khan had rebelled against us and destroyed our army, the father never suffered worse at our hands than rigid surveillance until the close of the war, when he was honourably restored to his country and to his throne. But more than this, during the more peaceable times he had travelled through our territories, receiving kindly attention and sympathy, and often holding close intercourse with our missionaries, and especially at Bombay, at one time awakening considerable hopes among them of his heart having been savingly impressed with the truth. Thus was

another of those peculiar agencies for bringing Christianity to bear upon that wonderful people outwardly abortive, as so many others had been, still perhaps to remind us that we must have more faith, and "cast our bread upon the waters to be found after many days."

When we consider the fearful acts of hostility so recently waged between the two countries, and bear in mind that they always attributed our invasion of Afghanistan to the abuse of the hospitality they showed Sir Alexander Burnes when a destitute wanderer in their country, we may be thankful for so much success. The Persian Bible had been provided and the enterprise first suggested by a lady in England, who wished thus to make some return to Afghanistan for our unjust aggression, and for the cruel bloodshed in which, we believe, she lost some dear relatives. Other channels for introducing the Scriptures both in Persian and in the vernacular Pushtoo have since been employed, and frequent applications are made by travellers for them, and for special tracts they have seen in the very remote regions of Bokhara and Herat, as well as in Cabul and Candahar, etc. Thus has the taste, at least, been excited for God's Word, and a demand created by which the leaven must have begun to work on the masses of Central Asia, so that the East and West, through

the missionaries in Turkey and India, are already *en rapport*; and, like the poles of two magnets prepared in completing the circle to produce a discharge and restore equilibrium, these nations, so long divorced from the gospel, may soon regain their wonted intercourse through the ancient channels of trade.

After about two years spent at this arduous and gallantly-defended post, Wheler's regiment being ordered away, he left it for others to enter into his labours. Peshawur, in addition to its notoriety for bigotry, superstition, and bloodthirstiness, was also celebrated for the learning of its Moollahs. These would, doubtless, have despised the simple gospel statements and colloquial intercourse with the common people to which Wheler confined himself, a [illegible] uld not rid themselves unharmed by his efforts, [illegible] Jebusites on Mount Zion, of the impregnability of their position. But now comes up a Joab and smites them.

On the murder in open day of Colonel Mackeson, the Head Commissioner of Peshawur, his successor, the well-known and distinguished Sir H. B. Edwardes, threw himself heartily into the cause of Christ; and amongst other efforts, seeing the need of more organized instrumentality to cope with so formidable a foe intrenched behind the nationality and the vene-

rable institutions of the country, called a meeting of all Christians in Peshawur and its neighbourhood to unite in manifestation of their fealty to Christ. An influential body was thus enlisted, and the sum of about £3000 having been given by parties either there or elsewhere, an invitation was forwarded to the Church Missionary Society to enter into the field. This was accepted, and shortly afterwards the Rev. R. Clark arrived and entered on missionary labour, being subsequently joined by that celebrated missionary, the late Rev. Dr. Pfander. Colonel Martin also, besides giving large sums of money, became a lay missionary for the secular work; in short, the usual appliances for spreading the gospel by preaching, schools, etc., were soon in operation, and the learned Moollahs were challenged in the open street by a man who knew their own religion as well as the gospel, and *their* mouths also were thenceforth shut. The late Colonel James, who succeeded Sir H. B. Edwardes, also afforded the fullest encouragement to the movement, and some of his successors also, and although several missionaries have been removed by death or sickness, the work still thrives. Hundreds of the cream of the youth have passed through the school, the fame of which is attracting scholars from all parts of Afghanistan itself; and besides the five years' devoted labour of

the late Rev. Mr. Lowenthal, who brought to bear unequalled powers of controversial learning, and gave the people a Testament in their vernacular before he fell a victim to assassination, others have each in their respective vocation "done virtuously," and a little church of converts now proclaims that Christianity "dwells in the land." The tribe of the "Eusofzai," the leading one in the Valley, now inquire for books which but recently were "held in abomination;" their spiritual guide, a man of the highest reputation among them, promoting the same by his own example.

Although no European footsteps may enter the dread defile of the Khyber, Christian converts of their own race traverse the wild fastnesses and fertile valleys beyond, not without thrilling tokens of interest being excited in some of its secluded corners. Nay, whilst travellers from Piedmont are seized and imprisoned at Bokhara because they are Christians, and all permission for our dreaded race to enter into Afghanistan refused, "the Word of the Lord is not bound." Perhaps even now on that blood-stained land where "Havelock's saints" erected their altar, and the bones of others equally valiant for the truth lie buried, the prayers of believers, though in secret, already "come up before Him like incense, and the lifting up of their

hands as the evening sacrifice." As a striking testimony to the success of the Christian policy, first inaugurated by Sir H. B. Edwardes, towards the state of Cabul and the inhabitants of the Valley, let us add that there has been no misunderstanding since with either; and on occasion of the Mutiny, when the larger portion of the force in Peshawur was in open revolt, so far from taking advantage of the opportunity against us, Afghans volunteered into our service in large numbers, thus enabling the Punjab Government to despatch considerable reinforcements to other parts: they also manifested hearty sympathy for our cause, and admiration of the courage and wisdom of our proceedings.

Colonel Wheler was next sent, in 1852-3, in course of relief, to the quiet outpost of Noorpoor, a hill town sixty or seventy miles north of Lahore. This was an agreeable contrast to Peshawur; the inhabitants, chiefly Hindoos or Sikhs, were a mild class of people, chiefly agricultural, who were scattered in small hamlets amidst their beautiful little valleys. It is in these rich districts that tea plantations have since arisen. The neighbourhood, too, is considered of a sacred character, and much frequented by pilgrims. The sacred fire at Jowalla Mukhi (from some gaseous exhalations), not many miles off, especially attracts vast assemblages at its

annual festival. Here Wheler had abundant opportunity to declare the gospel to many who had never heard it. Passing some time in this way, with other duties of regimental routine, most of his regiment being detached on command, he had a season of comparative repose, until by special request of the Commander-in-Chief he went to assume command of the 31st Regiment of Native Infantry at Calcutta. It was at this time he wrote as follows to a dear relative in England:—

"NOORPOOR, *Feb.* 19, 1853.

"MY DEAR ——,—I received your letter of November 19th whilst on the line of march between this and Peshawur. It fortunately was forwarded to the station just in time to overtake me, reaching me on the 15th January, while I arrived here on 27th of the month. I like the place very much; but, to tell you the truth, it little matters what place or part of the country I proceed to so long as I am where Divine Providence would have me to be, and am following its leadings, as I before remarked, as my purpose. Therefore, my dear ——, let not impatience get the better of your feeling in wishing so ardently for me to come home at once, before I see clearly that it is the will of Him who orders all things right. As you say in your last, let us wait on our God continually and seek to be filled with his Spirit.

In looking back at the past how have I been deceiving myself by supposing that the work of God in this and other countries is to be built up by money.

* * * * *

"I have never mentioned to you that some years ago, when at the top of the list of the captains of my old regiment, the 34th, I was induced after much pressing to purchase out the major; he, with the other officers of the regiment, thinking that by doing so my allowance would be greatly increased, and that I was almost sure of obtaining the command of the regiment. This led me to think that I should be able to bestow for missionary purposes, one thousand rupees monthly out of my pay—a noble idea many would say, and highly commendable. But now I hope I see my mistake. The Lord would say, 'Not by your human might, nor by the power of your money, is my work to be accomplished; but by my Spirit.' Thus was I mainly depending upon the work by money, instead of setting my heart on obtaining the power of his Spirit within me.

"Well, the Lord corrected me for this. He took my regiment from me, as you may recollect. It mutinied shortly after I was put in command, and was disbanded; and it was not till seven times passed over me (just seven years) that the Lord permitted me to get command of the present one.

I can now bless Him for it and perceive how, by crosses and afflictions, He works out all for our immortal good. All indeed are mercies in disguise. When I say this I ought to feel deeply ashamed of myself in not marking my blessings; my heart itself so dead and cold, my flesh still so strong. Oh that the old man may be entirely broken up, that I may be entirely crucified with Christ with the affections and lusts, and be born again of the sanctified Spirit of God! Oh that I had a deeper hunger and thirst after this standard of holiness! What a happiness it would be to be entirely free from inbred sin, with the constraining love of God so filling the soul as to rule and govern every principle and motive; also every faculty and affection of the heart.

"I find it very easy to wish this, while possessing scarcely a particle of it; so don't let me deceive you, which I fear I have been doing by my letters written about June last, and which you sent to your cousins, or rather sisters in Christ, for perusal. They will think me to be what I am not—spiritually minded and far advanced. I should be almost ashamed to go home I should so disappoint you. I must conclude.—Yours most affectionately,

"S. G. WHELER."

CHAPTER VII.

From this period until the mutiny in 1857 the writer, having left India, had fewer opportunities of having any news of Colonel Wheler, but it is probable he pursued the even tenor of his way amidst the light military duties of Barrackpore. Peace reigning throughout India under the enlightened rule of Lord Dalhousie, Israel dwelt safely. No missionary-phobia agitated the spirit of that enlightened statesman; but on his retirement, through an overworked constitution breaking down in the service of his country, there arose up "another king in Egypt which knew not Joseph." Lord Canning, on his accession in 1856, being inexperienced, unfortunately fell under the malign anti-missionary spirit, which had once and again endeavoured, through the press, to stamp Wheler's efforts with contempt. Serving themselves, heirs to all the old bigotry that had banished missionaries from India half a century before, this party were still opposed to every violation of their beloved "traditional policy," whether in putting down Suttee or any other asser-

tion of Christian principles over Hindooism or Mohammedanism. When their denunciations of Wheler's enthusiasm failed, they resorted to the old charge that he stirred up the people, and the evident disaffection of the Sepoys beginning to make itself felt near Calcutta, Wheler, still in command of a Sepoy regiment, had to bear the first brunt of the storm both from Sepoys and Europeans.

He had just before been requested by the Commander-in-Chief, as a personal favour, to assume command of the 34th Native Infantry, that his own regiment (the 31st) might be given to a friend of his, to which, of course, Wheler assented, and thus found himself, at the outburst of the Mutiny, with a regiment to which he was almost a stranger. By referring to his letter written at this date, and given already at p. 116, it will be seen that the Lord had prepared his servant for the approaching storm, and how, in the spirit of prayer he there inculcates (and doubtless enjoyed), he was kept "secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues." Thus he afterwards described his feelings at this period, saying that he never read any of the abusive newspapers and knew nothing of the outcry against him. "That day" did not come upon Wheler "unawares." It was as though the

Lord had said to him, as when the three men came to Abraham, "Shall I hide from him the thing which I do?" He seems to have enjoyed more nearness of communion with God during the crisis of the Mutiny than on any former occasion. As the same messengers brought to Abraham "the promise" and to Sodom its doom, so whilst the chief part of India was filled with confusion, bloodshed, and terror, Wheler, in the blessed work of establishing a fresh mission to our European soldiers, was witnessing "times of refreshment," wherein souls were "flocking to Christ as the doves to their windows," a breath of the revival that was enjoyed in Britain and America.

"But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you" (Luke xxi. 12). Jonah must first preach the preaching that God bids him to this "great Nineveh of three days' journey," and so it came to pass. Well had it been for India had Wheler's preaching been effectual for the gracious purpose designed, for surely such a striking message had never before so manifestly appealed to men throughout our Eastern Empire in God's behalf as did that document in which, answering the inquiries of the Government concerning his preaching to the Sepoys, Wheler asserted his duty in this matter. If, as when the King of Nineveh arose from his throne

when the word came to him, Lord Canning had caused it to be proclaimed through India, and Wheler's counsel had been acceptable, to "break off their sins by righteousness and their iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, it might have been a lengthening of their tranquillity." Instead of this, the whole community (of course with exceptions like the "Friend of India") rebelled yet more against God and against his servant, and especially the press, "lifting up their voice and saying, Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live." Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah, and India did not.

"And yet forty days and Nineveh was destroyed." The émeute of the 34th was on the 29th of March, coincident with the popular outcry in Calcutta, and the "Governor-general's" denunciation of Wheler for preaching; and on the 10th and 11th of May the Mutiny took effect in the surprise of Delhi with its royal family, grand magazines, and ancient prestige. "The flood was forty days upon the earth, and the waters increased." . . . . Every military station out of Bengal and Behar, between Peshawur and Patna, had revolted in that space of time, culminating with the tragedy at Cawnpore.

"And the waters prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days." So surely as the Bengal

Government publicly ignored the first principles of Christianity and British liberty, "forbidding to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sin alway," so did God publicly ignore their authority, which from that time virtually ceased throughout the greater portion of that Presidency; and by a striking providence it was delegated to others, who girded up their loins for the fight, and after reinstating order and confirming loyalty in their own provinces, volunteered and effected the deliverance of the beleaguered garrisons by capturing Delhi and co-operating towards the relief of Lucknow.

"Them that honour Me, I will honour." It was not until a reaction from traditional policy had been inaugurated by the Government in Bengal, and God-fearing men were at the head of the avengers, that God restored victory to our arms. Before this the Government had to offer up in sacrifice the chief authors of the ungodly conspiracy against Wheler and Christianity.

Blessed be God, even at this period there were more than "fifty righteous" found there, and well for India that it was so. Doubtless their intercessions, when thus awakened under God's judgments, prevailed. "Their work and labour of love which they showed towards his name" in ministering so abun-

dantly to the poor victims of the Mutiny, testified to the wholesome result of their heavenly Father's loving chastisement. "When the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented Him of the evil."

To return to Colonel Wheler. On the 29th March, 1857, a Sepoy of the 34th Regiment N.I., most probably intoxicated with drugs for the occasion, ran out sword in hand, in front of the regimental lines, calling on the men of the regiment to mutiny, and loudly defying officers or any one to touch him. Adjutant Baugh, attempting to seize him, got roughly handled, and both he and Sergeant-Major Hewson, who came to his help, were wounded; some of the other Sepoys, it is suspected, helping in the scuffle to maltreat them, whilst their comrades looked on for amusement. All this was immediately reported to Wheler by the sergeant-major in person. Colonel Wheler proceeded in company with Captain Drury to the scene of disturbance, and ordered the guard to load and advance against the mutinous Sepoy, who, rifle in hand, was continuing to parade in front of the lines, challenging the officers to touch him. The jemadar and guard, after moving a few paces, stopped and refused to advance, manifesting the same mutinous spirit as the Sepoy. Accordingly, seeing nothing else was

to be done, Wheler reported the matter to Major-General Hearsay, commanding the division, who, with the vigour of his character, galloped up with his escort of troops, and ordered the guard again to advance. With a force thus taken from another regiment and drawn up against them, they dared not disobey; and the General then leading his party against the mutinous Sepoy, the man on their drawing near shot himself. This led to the following correspondence with the Government:—

LIEUT.-COLONEL WHELER TO THE OFFICIATING BRIGADE-MAJOR, BARRACKPORE.

"BARRACKPORE, *April* 4, 1857.

"SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 4th inst., together with enclosures, with a request that I would afford the information called for for transmission to Government.

"In reply to your inquiries on this very delicate subject, on which I hope I may be allowed to express my sentiments freely, since they involve what I consider as part of my conscientious duty towards my heavenly Superior, I would beg to remark, in the first place, that there is no foundation whatever for my having held language to the men of my regiment indicating that it was my

expectation that they would sooner or later be converted to Christianity. To entertain such an expectation on right and solid grounds would afford me the highest gratification, both as regards my own regiment, the whole army, and every native in the country, as we should thus no longer witness such opposition as has been lately manifested towards the Government; all would be deeply impressed with the principles of our religion, particularly as regards their conduct to their superiors, as laid down in the first part of the 13th chapter of Romans.

"With regard to my having addressed the Sepoys on religious subjects, I beg to state that during the last twenty years and upwards, I have been in the habit of speaking to the natives of all classes—Sepoys and others, making no distinction, since there is no respect of persons with God—on the subject of our religion, in the highways, cities, bazaars, and villages (not in the lines and regimental bazaars). I have done this from a conviction that every converted Christian is expected, or rather commanded by the Scriptures, to make known the glad tidings of salvation to his lost fellow-creatures. Our Saviour having offered Himself up as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, by which alone salvation can be secured, He has directed that this

salvation shall be freely offered to all without exception.

"Should any Sepoy or other come to me earnestly soliciting instruction in the truths of our religion, I should consider myself bound to afford it to the best of my ability. To refuse such a request, I should incur the displeasure of the Almighty.—I have, etc.,

"S. G. WHELER,
"Lieut.-Colonel commanding 34th Regiment N.I."

Extract of a letter from Colonel Birch, Secretary of Government, to Major-General Hearsay, dated 13th April, 1857:—

"I am desired to request that you will call upon Colonel Wheler to state whether, in speaking to the Sepoys on the subject of our religion, he has spoken to any of the Sepoys of the 34th Regiment, which he commands, as well as others; and with reference to the concluding part of his letter, whether he intends it to be inferred that he has not spoken to any Sepoys upon the subject of the Christian religion, except when they have solicited instruction in the truths of that religion; and whether he has or has not volunteered his opinion and advice upon the subject of the Christian religion to any of the Sepoys of the 34th Regiment N.I., either collectively or in-

dividually, since that regiment has been under his command, and to other Sepoys in the same cantonment, and endeavoured to convert them to Christianity, either by exhorting them to embrace that religion, or by pointing out that their own religion is false or otherwise; and if not, what has been the nature of his conversation with the Sepoys to whom he has spoken on the subject of religion?"

Then follow certain minutes of the Governor-general and of Mr. Peacock, the purport of which is that further information should be obtained from Colonel Wheler as to whether, in speaking to the Sepoys on the subject of religion, he has spoken to those of his own regiment as well as to others.

The following is Colonel Wheler's reply, addressed to the Assistant-Adjutant-General Presidency Division:—

"BARRACKPORE, *April* 15, 1857.

"SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your memorandum of yesterday's date, requesting me to afford the fullest information in my power relating to the subject-matter of the letter dated Council Chamber, Fort William, the 13th of April, 1857, from Colonel Birch, Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department, and addressed to Major-General Hearsay, C.B., commanding Presidency Division. In reply to this

second communication I would beg to express my regret that I did not explain myself so explicitly, or afford so full an explanation as was expected, in my first answer as regards my addressing the Sepoys and others on the subject of religion. I would now therefore beg to state that it has been my invariable plan to act on the broad line which Scripture enforces, that is, to speak without reserve to every person. When I therefore address natives on this subject, whether individually or collectively, it has been no question with me as to whether the person or persons I addressed belong to this or that regiment, or whether he is a shopkeeper, merchant, or otherwise, but I speak to all alike as sinners in the sight of God; and I have no doubt that I have often in this way (indeed am quite certain) addressed Sepoys of my own regiment, as also of other regiments, at this and other stations where I have been quartered.

"I have told them plainly that they are all lost and ruined sinners, both by nature and by practice, like myself; that we can do nothing to save ourselves in the way of justifying ourselves in the sight of God; our hearts being sinful, all our works must consequently be sinful in his sight, and therefore there can be no salvation by works on which they are all resting and depending. The

justice of God demands an infinite punishment for sin, and there is but one way in which guilty man can stand just before God, who is infinite in holiness and purity, and that is by believing and embracing the sacrifice made for sin by Jesus Christ the Son of God. In this way, and only this, can the sinner become reconciled to an offended God; and this salvation is freely offered to Hindoos, Mussulmans, and every denomination of men in the whole world. These have constituted the leading points which I have generally endeavoured to bring to their notice, and which, in declaring them, lead to various interesting questions as to the efficacy of their own works, of washing in the Ganges, proceeding on pilgrimages, worshipping all kinds of creatures instead of the Creator, and other methods of man's invention—all of which I endeavour to answer according to the spirit and principle laid down in the Scriptures of truth, the standard by which alone we can meet all their arguments. As to the question whether I have endeavoured to convert Sepoys and others to Christianity, I would humbly reply that this has been my object, and I conceive is the aim and end of every Christian who speaks the Word of God to another, namely, that the Lord would make him the happy instrument of converting his neighbour to God, or in other words,

to rescue him from everlasting destruction; and if there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth (whether Sepoy or other), should not the instrument of that person's conversion join in rejoicing likewise?

"Such, I feel confident, would be the feelings of every commanding officer being an experienced Christian, whereas the very opposite would take place in the feelings of one who never studied the subject, and therefore possessed no deepened views of spiritual religion. The fear of man would then preponderate, and the very idea of a Sepoy of his regiment becoming a true convert to Christianity, would, if I mistake not, so far from causing him to rejoice at the event, set him trembling from head to foot with fear: and thus it will ever be when the fear of God is wanting in the heart. On matters connected with religion, I feel myself called upon to act in two capacities—to 'render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,' and to 'render unto God the things that are God's.' Temporal matters and spiritual matters are in this passage clearly placed under their respective heads.

"When speaking, therefore, to a native on the subject of religion, I am then acting in the capacity of a Christian soldier under the authority and order of my heavenly Superior; whereas in temporal matters

I act as a Government officer under the authority and orders of my earthly superior. In carrying out these duties towards my heavenly Superior, I am reminded by the Saviour that I must count the cost, and expect to meet persecution, 'to be brought before kings and rulers for his sake,' to be condemned by the world all around me; but his favour and protection is promised, and grace and strength in every time of trouble and difficulty, and a rich reward hereafter. I take shame to myself in having manifested such coldness and lukewarmness in the service of Him who underwent the most agonizing and ignominious death in order that He might fully atone for our guilt and sin.

"In conclusion, I trust I shall be excused for having taken more liberty in speaking on this delicate subject than on another occasion.

"S. G. WHEELER,

"Lieut.-Colonel Commanding 34th Regiment N.I."

MINUTE BY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

"The evidence taken by the Courts-martial and Courts of Inquiry* which have been held on the

* "Special Court of Inquiry to investigate the conduct of the quarter guard of the 34th Regiment N. I., on the 29th of March; Court-martial for the trial of Mungal Pandy, Sepoy of the 34th Regiment N. I.; Court-martial for the trial of Isseree Pandy, jemadar of the 34th Regiment N. I.; Special Court of Inquiry into the present state of feeling of the 34th Regiment N. I."

insubordinate and mutinous acts of certain native officers and Sepoys of the 34th Regiment N. I., imposes upon the Governor-general in Council the duty of considering the conduct pursued by the commanding officer of that corps in the course of the events disclosed by these investigations.

"In respect to Colonel Wheler's proceedings, the following facts are already on record:—

"On the evening of the 29th of March, Colonel Wheler proceeded to the lines of his regiment, having been informed by one of his officers that a Sepoy was parading in front of the line, inciting the men to mutiny. On arriving there he saw the man walking up and down armed, and was informed that the adjutant and sergeant-major of the regiment had both been wounded in an attempt to secure him. On meeting the quarter-guard Colonel Wheler directed two or three men of the guard to load, but upon the suggestion of Captain Drury, who accompanied him, extended this order to all. He then directed the jemadar to take the guard and secure the mutineer. The jemadar murmured, and Colonel Wheler thereupon repeated the order two or three times.

"What followed shall be told in Colonel Wheler's own words:—

"'He (the jemadar) at last ordered the guard

to advance; they did so six or eight paces and halted. The native officer returned to me, stating that none of the men would go on; I felt it was useless going on any further in the matter. Some one, a native in undress, mentioned to me that the Sepoy in front was a Brahmin, and that no one would hurt him. I considered it quite useless, and a useless sacrifice of life to order an European officer with the guard to seize him, as he would no doubt have picked off the European officer without receiving any assistance from the guard itself. I then left the guard and reported the matter to the brigadier.'

"All this is frankly stated by Colonel Wheler, and here his share in the transaction ends.

"Major-general Hearsay commanding the Presidency Division, then rode up accompanied by his aide-de-camp and others, and having ascertained that the muskets of the guards were loaded, ordered the jemadar and Sepoys of the guard to follow him. They did so, and he led them forward against the mutineer, who upon their drawing near shot himself.

"This is the substance of all that appears in evidence regarding Colonel Wheler's conduct and the motives of it. Were it necessary to come to an opinion upon this evidence alone, I could come to none more favourable to Colonel Wheler than

that he is entirely unfit to be entrusted with the command of a regiment. But the occasion is so grave and the misconduct of Colonel Wheler bears *primâ facie* so serious an aspect, that I do not think that any decision upon that officer's case will be satisfactory which is not founded upon a full inquiry specially directed to his conduct, giving him of course opportunity of explanation and defence. No such inquiry has yet been had, Colonel Wheler having appeared in court on each occasion either as prosecutor or witness. I therefore propose that the Commander-in-chief be requested to submit the conduct of Colonel Wheler on the 29th of March to an investigation by court-martial, or to such other investigation as His Excellency may think proper. Before the proceedings of the Court-martial and Court of Inquiry on the 34th regiment came before the Government, the conduct of Colonel Wheler in another matter not immediately connected with the events of the 29th of March, but materially affecting his fitness for military command, had been the subject of inquiries addressed by order of the Government to Colonel Wheler himself. I allude to the rumours which reached the Government that Colonel Wheler had lately addressed the men of his regiment on religious subjects. Colonel Wheler's answers were not satisfactory, but I do

not propose to submit this part of his conduct to investigation by a military court, although I reserve to myself full liberty to deal with it hereafter.

"*April* 9, 1857. "CANNING."

The jemadar and some of the guard were afterwards tried by court-martial for mutiny, and hanged, confessing their guilt and warning their comrades. Thus was the Mutiny most successfully nipped in the bud at Barrackpore, all honour to the gallant Hearsay. The wing of the 34th at the station was disbanded five weeks afterwards, and the rest of the regiment, though disarmed like other Sepoy regiments on a subsequent occasion, manifested no farther symptoms of insubordination. And now might not some praise have been expected by *all concerned* in this effectual prevention of mutiny? Can any one not blinded by prejudice or utterly ignorant of military matters, see aught to blame in Wheler on this occasion? Imagine, as some seem to have hoped, that Colonel Wheler "had gone out with the mutineer Sepoy," even supposing the guard had followed "to see the fun!" Colonel Sir W. Napier has some caustic remarks in his "History of the Peninsular War," regarding officers in command at the battle of Albuera, seeking personal encounters with the enemy. If

such exploits are to be deprecated even amidst the excitement of battle, how much more during the discharge of regimental duty on parade. No! without detracting from the well-deserved honour bestowed on the General for his conspicuous share in the success, he was not a little indebted also to the calm forbearance with which Wheler avoided all collision with the Sepoys under the peculiar state of excitement they exhibited from the recent fracas between the officers and the mutineer, which enabled the superior authorities, who alone had the means at their disposal, to interpose effectually and overwhelm the incipient insurrection. As Sir C. Napier observes, "It is said that in mutinies age has abated the officer's energy. Perhaps so, but an awkward question may be asked, might not younger men have been energetic in a wrong direction?"

The occasion was very inviting; hardly a full European regiment in all Bengal at that crisis, whilst a large force of Sepoys was in the immediate vicinity of Barrackpore, only waiting the preconcerted signal to "fall on," and when the 19th Regiment N. I., on the 19th of February, had taken the initiative so boldly! What nice pickings in Calcutta too, and the strongest fort in the world ready to put them in, lying almost undefended. We really think few Sepoy regiments came out of the ordeal

so satisfactorily. Yes, the 31st at Saugor excelled them all, for quite spontaneously they rose up against the mutineers, and drove them out of the station, whereby that capital of Bundelcund, with its fort, arsenal, and important position, remained an asylum for refugees from surrounding stations, and a basis for operations against more successful mutineers through Central India. That regiment maintained their ground for a year single-handed before any relief could reach them from without. But then *the 31st was Wheler's regiment, which he had only recently left, and it was trained under his own hand, imbued with his principles, and doubtless saturated to the full with his preaching.* "By their fruits shall ye know them."

When the Government were once more their own masters, and meting out honour to those who had rescued them, the least they should have done would have been to reinstate Colonel Wheler in the honoured office he had so long occupied as regimental commander. But how stand the facts of the case? Wheler, without trial or cause assigned, was deprived of the legitimate reward of forty years' continued service of his country in India, being placed on the retired list at a reduced allowance of £300 a year, when, like his brethren now at home, but for this arbitrary act of the Government, he

would have been entitled to the option of retiring to his native land, on the full allowance of his rank as colonel, etc., of £2000 a year.

Some may say he was worn out, and the Government needed younger and more efficient men, but this was not the customary mode of accelerating promotion; on the contrary, it was a course only adopted towards parties for misconduct and inefficiency. It is written, "I the Lord hate robbery for burnt-offering;" and again, "There was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man." Wheler never complained or attempted to justify his conduct; indeed he expressed himself almost angrily towards one who wrote in his defence to the public prints. He expressed himself deeply conscious of his many deficiencies and many failures, and, as he had said twenty years before, he was quite willing now rather to descend in rank than to rise any higher. He gladly retired from public life that he might, "being such an one as Paul the aged," recover his strength, ere he went hence to be no more seen. His spirit was overflowing with praise for the marvellous deliverance God had vouchsafed to India and the Government, and all his communications seemed to say—

"Now, with my waking thoughts
Bright with thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs
Bethel I'll raise;
So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee."

Some of his friends had thought him wrong not to retire from the service years before, that he might be more unfettered in his work for God; but he was ever fearful of going before the Lord. Called of God in the army, he could not see it his duty to forsake it, when he knew there was no one else to occupy his position and do the same work. A soldier never leaves his post until regularly relieved. Wheler used to say a brick is never taken out of the kiln until sufficiently burned. He might feel the discipline of military life good for his own spirit; he never felt duty irksome or its employments unpleasant; continually called to go forth knowing not whither, having a house, it might be, or a tent, he had "no continuing city." From long experience he had proved that his God was all-sufficient; he delighted to be dependent on Him, and, amidst the chequered scenes and vicissitudes of Indian life, to feel that he daily received everything immediately from his own hand. His attachment to the native army was great, and he had

made it his home. Foreseeing its ruin, like our Lord towards Jerusalem, he manifested his pity, whilst he accepted the issue, that God was superseding the native element for his work by the European, having "refused the tabernacle of Joseph and not chosen the tribe of Ephraim, but chosen the tribe of Judah, the Mount Zion which He loved." Henceforth giving all his attention to the European soldiers now pouring into Calcutta, "he fed them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands."

We leave this to be described by his true yoke-fellow, Mr. Taylor,* who, as one of the first Scripture-readers sent out by the Society from England during the Mutiny, lived with Colonel Wheler, and shared in all his labours. The Government having removed the latter from the army without a hearing, or calling on any witnesses in his defence, seeing "our law doth not condemn a man before it hear him or know what he doeth," let us hear this fresh testimony concerning him, "for at the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."

* In the next chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

It should be understood that previous to the period of which Mr. Taylor writes, the barracks of our European army in India had been rigidly excluded from all external religious agency, an entrenched camp and impregnable against ordinary efforts hitherto tried. Military chaplains might visit the hospital and have the men for an hour under instruction on Sunday, but in barracks all reverted to its normal condition immediately after, and, limited only by the "custom of war in like cases," every man then "did what was right in his own eyes." In a few exceptional cases a regiment might have an internal agency in some godly soldiers who themselves exercised a restraint on many flagrant iniquities, according to their number and standard of piety, and instances have been known where this was so powerfully exercised that an oath or improper expression was unknown, and hundreds were, perhaps, seen on their knees night and morning. No mission had been hitherto established to the soldiers in India, and officers, even if religious,

were ill-circumstanced for this work. It was a rule that when one of them appeared in barracks a non-commissioned officer called out "Attention!" and every man, whether asleep or awake, roused up to stand whilst the officer remained. Even Wheler had hitherto abstained from visiting barracks. It had become an understood thing that "a man's house was his castle," and the barracks, as the soldier's home, was to be sacred from intrusion. It therefore required no little tact and delicacy to break through a custom which had hitherto shut out the servants of God from seeking the salvation of soldiers' souls. This could only be done by making oneself a welcome guest there amongst other familiar visitors. That such was possible, and that Wheler and his fellow-labourer, Mr. Taylor, succeeded, is fully manifest in the following narrative.

The ice once broken, it is to be hoped that the degraded isolation which formerly made the soldier in India an outcast from society, and the barrack shunned as a pest-house, will cease there, as it has done in this country.

When first awakened to a sense of eternal things the poor soldier in India regarded the barrack with especial abhorrence. The very idea of being perpetually in the presence of a hundred soldiers,

besides natives, in one room, is repulsive. The common expression of such was, "Oh, it's a hell. No man can turn to God in the army." If any resolutely "set their faces as a flint" in trying to save their souls they would perhaps procure some mud hut in the bazaar, or, if in standing camp,* even a roost made of boughs amongst the trees. In Europe, when a man is "vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked," he has only to get up and go out; but a soldier in India, what with military discipline and the heat of the climate confining him to his barrack, has no place for retirement. The strange shifts sometimes resorted to in order to secure a short time for reflection, or an opportunity for prayer, would startle those who are ignorant of a soldier's trials and the extremities to which men in the army are sometimes driven. Many a vivid impression of eternal things, melting the poor prodigals into tears under the Word, becomes "as the morning cloud and the early dew which passeth away," when "being let go they return to their own company."

This barrack visitation was just as much a mission to the heathen, as when Wheler, on a former occasion, going to the "regions beyond"

* Where they remained for a considerable time as an army of exercise, or for artillery practice.

where they had never heard the gospel, had declared the glad tidings of salvation, and prepared the way for future labourers. On the eve of the Battle of Chillianwallah, in 1849, two artillerymen who were in the habit of seeking rest for their souls outside the camp were taken prisoners, and one at least killed: another was killed in like manner at Peshawur, when his assailants, too bloodthirsty for any preliminaries, severed his head from his body whilst he was praying aloud according to his usual custom. Truly it might be said, "Woe is me that I dwell in Mesech," for "he that departed from evil made himself a prey."

How was this Jericho to be captured? Formal religious services, even if permitted, would not meet the case, as soldiers are averse to such additional tax on their time by set duties. In barracks they must feel at home, though they have none, that "when the sun ariseth they may gather themselves together and lay them down in their dens." It was only by friendly talk, Bible in hand, sitting down with them on their beds, and giving a tract or reading a passage, with conduct modified by every passing occurrence, that, even if Christian men got access to the barracks, any favourable impression could be made on the hearts of these "prisoners of hope;" and it is thus our army scripture readers, like

their brethren of the London City Mission, have made themselves a necessity and an institution to the soldier. The position has been carried, and, unless by neglect it is allowed, like the "Redan," to be regained by the enemy, it affords a splendid key to the basis of operations for evangelizing the army. But what are the twelve scripture-readers in all India for its one hundred or more European stations?

The following is Mr. Taylor's narrative:—

"ORPHAN HOUSE, CHERRY-TREE HILL, SHEFFIELD,
"*April 9th*, 1866.

"In the year 1858 I arrived at Calcutta, and at once proceeded to Barrackpore, where I was appointed to labour amongst British soldiers. Having a letter of introduction to Colonel Wheler, I at once made for his quarters, and received a hearty reception from him. He said, 'You are at liberty to share this house with me, if you can make yourself at home.' This kind hospitality was quite unexpected; a stranger in a strange land, I regarded it as the appointment of Divine Providence. I soon found myself under the roof of a great man, great on account of his piety and goodness towards mankind. For two years and three months I remained with him, always receiving the kindness of a true friend. During this time we had

every morning and evening prayer and reading of the Scriptures together. Thousands of precious hours we enjoyed privately in conversation on religious subjects.

"The first day I spent with him, he said—

"'Now, what are your plans in working for Christ in this country?'

"I at once gave the following answer—'Every morning at six o'clock I shall visit the sick in the hospitals for two or three hours; in the afternoon visit the barrack-rooms, and in the evening conduct a Bible or prayer meeting.'

"He said, 'If those are your arrangements, with your permission I will carry them out also with you.'

"It was a great comfort to me to have his company during my various labours, and it gave me an opportunity of observing his character as a military man as well as a Christian.

"On one occasion I was from some cause or other five minutes behind the time in coming from my room, to visit the hospital, and I shall never forget the kind but sharp rebuke I received from him; he said 'When I make an engagement I am always to the minute, and I hope you will act upon the same principle with me; five minutes lost never to return again, solemn thing! Time is more precious than gold.' The principle of punctuality

he always enforced upon both native and English soldiers. He would often say, 'Punctuality is half the battle against a temporal or spiritual foe. Be punctual in all engagements, and you will be sure to accomplish much by getting the confidence of those with whom you have to do.'

"As a Christian I never found his equal: his faith in God was always the same; his prayers were clothed with great simplicity; he had close fellowship with his Maker, and would in prayer converse with Him with earnestness and solemnity, as if he was holding conversation with a dear friend. His love of prayer was great; he would never leave the house on any account before he had spent ten minutes in private prayer to seek the blessing of God to go with him; and he never returned home but he at once retired for prayer, to implore the Divine blessing on his coming in as well as his going out. He was always to be found at our prayer meeting, and ever ready to mingle his devotions with the humblest of men. It was his custom to visit the families of private soldiers and officers, and his rule was to converse with them on religious subjects, and to pray for them before he left. I have often heard officers in the army say that they never saw such a man as Colonel Wheler; his talk was always on one subject, death and eternity, the fall

of man, and Jesus Christ the only Saviour. Some admired his spirit whilst others spoke evil of him, saying that he was mad, and a fool.

"One day General B—— came to see him; the servant came to me and said,

"'The Colonel is engaged in prayer, and I must not go to him, for he has often said that let come who may, he must never be disturbed during his hours of prayer.'

"I at once went to the General, who said, 'I am in great haste,' and expressed a wish to see Wheler. I then went to Colonel Wheler's private room, and found him engaged in earnest prayer, with his arms uplifted and his hands clasped together. I overheard the words, 'I will not let Thee go unless Thou bless me.' I told the visitor to wait a short time, and the Colonel would come and see him.

"With much impatience he said, 'I cannot wait, I must see him in a moment.'

"In order to pass a few minutes away, I began to converse with him upon the events of the day, which had some effect in taking up his attention. After ten minutes the Colonel came into the room. After apologizing for keeping the General so long in waiting, he said,

"'I have certain portions of the day for par-

ticular business, and this is my hour for being about the work of the King of kings.'

"The General smiled and said, 'All very well; I am in the wrong and not you.'

"It mattered not in whose company he was engaged, religion would always be introduced by him, but in a mild and gentle way, so that the most refined mind could not but admire and love him. He was always faithful in the discharge of his duty to God and man, and would remind all with whom he had to do, that they must soon die; and then raising his voice and lifting his right hand, looking the person with whom he had to do in the face—and his eye possessed language which never failed to accomplish good effect—he would say:—'*What then?* Eternity! eternity! solemn eternity! Are you now ready for eternity?' I have often seen proud, stout-hearted military men melted into tears under his exhortations; many officers as well as privates have been led to Christ through his instrumentality.

"I remember a few soldiers of H.M.'s 53rd Regiment coming to our quarters to see our dear friend respecting the one thing needful, the salvation of their souls, when he at once said, 'My dear men, I am very happy to see you. It makes my heart rejoice more than if thousands of gold coins

were given to me.' They related to him their past history. 'Ah!' said he, 'when I was a young man I was as bad as any of you. Yet God for Jesus Christ's sake had mercy upon my poor soul, and that mercy He will give unto you if you will give up your sins. One thing I want to impress upon your minds is this, that you cannot hold sin and holiness in one hand, neither will one heart contain the two principles; light and darkness cannot exist together. If, then, you are willing to become the soldiers of the Lord Jesus, you must enlist under the banner of his cross, and so long as you are faithful to his cause, He will be faithful to you.' Several of these men I know became members of the Established Church, others connected themselves with the Wesleyan Society, and became a blessing to many. During the time we lived together, I have seen hundreds of soldiers come to him to ask the question, 'Sir, what must I do to be saved?' He would never allow any to go from under his roof without reading the Scripture and prayer.

"A native regiment arrived at Barrackpore from up the country. A captain in connection with the regiment came to see my late friend, and said,

"'Colonel, I have often heard about you, and felt anxious to see you. I have been a great sinner, and my past life has been badly spent. Drink has

been my besetting sin. I am now anxious to begin to lead a new life, and I feel assured that you, by your prayers, will be a blessing to me. I shall regard it a great favour if you will let me have a room in your house, however small matters not; I only want to be near you, and I am sure there will be some hope of my reformation.'

"He at once came to me to ask if I was willing to have the captain in the house with us. 'I am anxious to do the poor man good, and if we can lead him to Christ, remember one soul is more valuable than the whole world. The captain is a stranger to me, but he looks very sorry on account of his past life; and is anxious to be as much as possible out of the company of his old companions, and by living with us we may be able to do him good service.'

"After the captain had been with us a short time he became a decided Christian, and I believe at the present time he is a magistrate at one of the principal military stations in India.

"A short time after Dr. —— came to this station; he was much given to intemperate habits, but began to see the evil of his way after several interviews with Colonel Wheler. He had been repeatedly warned by the authorities, but by the grace of God he became a reformed man, dis-

charged his duties faithfully, and proved a blessing to the army.

"The liberality of Colonel Wheler brought within its compass the whole world. He was a friend to the Bible Society, the Religious Tract Society, and all missionary societies. His purse was ever open to all. When I first became acquainted with him, his income was £1400 per annum, and he gave £1100 to various charitable institutions. In some cases he would give as much as £100 to one object. He was a friend to orphans, and he gave repeatedly to George Müller of Bristol, for the support of his orphans, the sum of £100 at a time.. To the Bible and other Societies he would give the same amount. It mattered not who sought his benevolence, they received it if he found them deserving cases. He did not give away his money to be seen of men, for in most cases he would request that his name should never appear in any society's reports. Every Sunday and Wednesday afternoon, at half-past four o'clock, might be seen upwards of fifty blind and infirm old men and women sitting before the door of his house to receive his hospitality, and after each had received a portion of [illegible], etc., he would read to them a portion of the New Testament, and exhort them to become the children of God by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

"He took great interest in young men, natives of the country, and almost every day twelve or fifteen might be seen at his house, waiting for private conversation with him on Christianity, and not a few became the disciples of Jesus. I remember two of these lads, who, because of their faith in Christ, became outcasts from their families and friends, and for changing their religion they lost a great portion of money. In giving advice to these youths he said, 'Do not give up your faith in God: as sure as you honour Him, so sure will He honour you; if not in this life it will be in eternity.' He interested himself in their temporal and spiritual welfare, and succeeded in getting them good Government situations, so that they were independent of their families and friends. The natives admired and loved him, and have often said of him, that he was the best man they ever met with, and it may truly be said of him, 'When the ear heard him, then it blessed him, and when the eye saw him it gave witness to him, because he delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him: the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him, and he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.'

"When H.M. 67th Regiment came to Barrackpore, a number of men called upon him, and said

they were anxious to have a place where they could hold meetings for prayer. He at once said, 'My house is open to you at any time for that object, and I and Mr. Taylor, with some of your best men, will conduct the meetings.' I have often seen no fewer than one hundred persons present at the meetings. Great numbers of ungodly men soon became reformed characters, and spread their influence in the barrack-rooms, and not a few were called in a short time to leave this world of sin and sorrow, for the rest prepared for all who die in the faith of Christ. In a short time this regiment manifested such a moral change, that the commander said, 'I never saw the like before. It is very seldom that I have now to hold courts-martial upon my men; their general conduct in the barrack-room is good, and very few cases of drunkenness are to be found.'

"During the time the regiment was in this station, cholera visited the place, and great numbers of the men died. In a few days the station was in great excitement, and the question was, 'What shall I do to be saved?' Very few recovered when once affected by this deadly plague. During this time my friend Wheler might be seen four or five hours a day in the hospitals, sitting on the bed of some poor dying man, trying to impart comfort to the spirit which was soon to be in another world.

One evening about twelve o'clock I was sent for to visit about twenty men, who had suddenly been affected with this disease. He at once said, 'I am anxious to go with you; it will not be safe for you to go out alone.' We had no sooner arrived at the hospital than he began to converse with those men who were sensible, about their state of mind, and earnestly inquired, 'Are you ready? Are you ready?' One man with his dying strength seized his hand, and said—

"'Oh, my dear Colonel Wheler, I never thought that it would come to this. I would give a world to have only one day of health, to listen to your advice. You have often warned me to flee from the wrath to come, but I made light of it, and thought there was time enough yet; and often have you said, 'if I did not repent, the Almighty would laugh at my calamity and mock when my fear cometh; now it is too late, He laughs at my calamity and mocks now my fear cometh.' He died in a few hours, saying, 'Lord, have mercy upon my soul.'

"Another man, whose bed was near to that of the one just named, was a true disciple of Jesus; he was a regular attendant at our meetings, and under the instructions given by my late friend, he found the one thing needful, which he always prized far above gold and silver. This man was in a far different

condition; he had not to seek Jesus in his last moments. Lifting his head and eyes, he said, 'I thank you, Colonel, for the interest you have taken in my soul's salvation. I trust by divine grace to be able to show you and all present, how a Christian can die.' He then began to sing, 'There is a fountain filled with blood,' and with a loud voice he said, 'Colonel Wheler, angels are coming; yes, look how bright and beautiful; cannot you hear them sing? I never heard anything like it.' We remained with him one hour, and during that time my friend sat upon the dying man's bed, talking to him about the happiness of being found in Christ. 'Oh, it is a glorious thing,' said he; he then gave a sigh, and the Colonel in earnest prayer committed the soul of this saint in Jesus into the hands of God. The spirit was gone, gone to be for ever with the Lord.

"I might relate great numbers of cases, where soldiers have died happy in the Lord, who were brought to the Saviour through his instrumentality. Eternity alone will be able to make manifest the great good he accomplished in the British army.

"Colonel Wheler did not confine his labours to Barrackpore; once every fortnight, with myself, he visited the barracks and hospitals at Calcutta, Dum

Dum, and Chinsurah. He always carried with him a copy of the New Testament, and a large number of tracts, and quietly he would go from man to man, saying a few words, and leave with them a tract. On one occasion a young man turned to him with a savage look, and said—

"'Do not trouble me.'

"'My good fellow,' said the Colonel, 'do not be offended. I wish you well, well for life, well for death, and well for eternity.'

"In about half an hour after, this man came to him, and said, 'Sir, I ask your pardon, for my sharp remarks to you; I have been thinking if you wish me well, surely I ought to begin to wish myself well.'

"The Colonel said, 'If you wish it to be well with you, receive Christ as your Saviour. You must give up sin, begin to pray, read your Bible, and seek divine help, and you will find the peace of God which passeth human understanding.' This man became a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

"When I accompanied my dear friend to any distant place to visit the soldiers, we travelled sometimes by railway, sometimes by boat, at other times by carriage. I never knew him spend an idle hour; his Bible, which he called his best companion, was always at hand; he would read a

portion and ask my opinion, and then he would give his own, saying that by spending our time in that way we should instruct each other.

"One day, after spending three hours together in the barrack-rooms at Fort William, Calcutta, we went to sit for half an hour in our carriage; I had brought some bread and meat. He said—

"'We will divide it, and then we shall be ready for three hours' more work.'

"I said, 'We must rest a little longer.'

"He manifested some uneasiness in sitting as he thought too long, and said, 'We must go; the King's business requires haste.'

"When he accosted a man he would put his hand upon his shoulder, and say, 'I want you to be a good soldier for Queen Victoria, but I am anxious that you should be also a good soldier of Christ.' At other times he would repeat some short Scripture passage, such as, 'Prepare to meet thy God;' 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God;' 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?' 'Ye must be born again,' etc. 'These are God's words and not mine; my words may soon die away, but the Word of God liveth and abideth for ever.' He would never allow sin to go unreproved, yet he did it with much kindness, so that the most sensitive could not but feel

that he intended it for good, and not unfrequently have men heartily thanked him for it.

"On another occasion we were visiting the hospitals together, and we met with a man very near death. My friend first addressed him, and turned to me and said, 'Here is a poor man near the door of death without Christ, and if he dies in his present condition he must be lost for ever;' and then turning to the dying man, said, 'Most certainly you will be lost if you die without Christ; Christ is the only foundation for the sinner's hope. Can you bear the thought of being for ever lost? Lost! lost! not for a year, not for an age, but eternally lost! Oh, eternity, eternity, through eternity! You need not be lost. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and you are welcome.' The man became melted into tears, and said, 'Sir, pray for me.' 'I will with pleasure; but whilst I pray you must also pray, and cast all your sins upon Christ. You must believe in Him.'

"The earnestness of the prayer I shall not soon forget. The following is a portion of it:—'O my dear heavenly Father, didst Thou not give thy only Son Jesus Christ to die for the sins of this poor man? Art Thou not now willing to receive this poor creature for the sake of Jesus? I believe Thou art. Be pleased in thy infinite mercy to give

thy Holy Spirit unto him this moment, that he may feel his lost condition without Christ. Thou seest him now upon the brink of death. Be pleased to give unto him a living faith in Christ, that in the hour of his departure from this world he may be found, like the dying thief, in paradise with Jesus. This prayer was attended with much good; the poor man began to express some hope that God would receive him through Christ, and before he died he felt fully assured that his peace was made with his Maker. Great numbers of other such cases I could name.

"Colonel Wheler was made a great blessing to poor soldiers in the time of sickness and death. His labours amongst British soldiers were not without much difficulty and opposition. Clergymen and officers have tried to frustrate his efforts. A clergyman once complained to the Colonel of the — Regiment, stating that he hoped that he would prevent Colonel Wheler from visiting his men. I had an interview with this Colonel respecting this matter, and I said I hoped he would not interfere with the labours of Colonel Wheler. He replied, 'I shall; I will not have him near my men.' 'Well,' said I, 'you must take the consequence; remember that he is doing the work of God, and if a punishment is sent by the Almighty for your so doing, I shall

not be surprised.' 'Well,' said he, 'I will risk that.' This Colonel was soon removed from his post. How clergymen could seek to prevent so good a work I am at a loss to know, and the more so when we remember that Colonel Wheler was a true member of the Church of England.

"On another occasion one of the military surgeons wrote the following letter to his Colonel:—

"'BARRACKPORE, *May* 11, 1859.

"'MY DEAR COLONEL,—I would call your attention to Colonel Wheler's daily visits to the hospital, with a view of imparting religious instructions to the men, which is undesirable; his denunciations are not fit for the men to hear. I would wish that he and others who are not authorized religious advisers, may be warned against visiting the men.—Yours very truly, '——.'

"The following was his Colonel's reply:—

"'MY DEAR ——,—The purport of your letter shall be conveyed to Colonel Wheler, but I dare not take upon myself the great moral responsibility of throwing any cold water on his work and good endeavour for the eternal welfare of your patients.—Yours etc., '——.'

"The above was sent to Colonel Wheler, and he wrote to the surgeon who made a complaint—

"'SIR,—There is no respect of persons with God.—Yours truly, 'S. WHELER.'

"I have known, on two or three occasions, where colonels have interfered with his work, that the sentries have presented bayonets to him; and when he has asked the reason for so doing, they have said, 'The Colonel's order is that you must not enter the hospitals or barracks;' and on one visit to the hospital he was dragged out by the neck and arms at the request of the Colonel. He never resisted, but calmly left the matter in the hands of his Master; and when driven from one station he would travel ten or twenty miles to another, where he thought he would not be interfered with.

"After I had been living a few days with him, I was anxious to know his views respecting the cause of the Mutiny. One day, in reply to my question, he said, 'I consider it a punishment from the Almighty for our unfaithfulness in this country: the sins of drunkenness, covetousness, etc., have been common evils amongst English people in this land. Again, I consider that God gave England this empire that she might spread the principles of Christianity, not by main force, but by the simple

preaching of the gospel and holy living; this has not been done to the extent it ought to have been, therefore we need not wonder at this Mutiny coming upon us like a thunder-clap. It is not to be ascribed to any particular man; it is the sins of *all* Englishmen which have brought this upon us. Some have said that it is the preaching of the gospel amongst the Sepoys which has unsettled their minds, and produced the Mutiny. I do not believe this; I would rather say that it is because we have not had more preaching amongst them. During my past experience, I have always found the people willing to listen to gospel truths when kindly brought before them, and they have and will always respect good men. There are exceptions to the rule, but in very few cases have I found them.'

"The cause of his being put upon the list of half-pay officers, I believe, was never communicated to him. Indirectly, it was said that it was because he preached too much amongst the people. I have conversed with great numbers of officers who have been under his authority, and all to a man have said to me that they never saw a better military officer than Major-General Wheler. He was always at his post, and everything he did was done with military firmness: the men generally highly re-

spected him. He would not compromise his principles for any one, and whilst he always tried to do his duty to his Queen and country, he considered that his duty to God must be his chief concern."

CHAPTER IX.

HAVING now seen the Indian Empire reconquered and pacified, and the flood of fresh European troops in a measure provided for by the inauguration of a regular mission, the Government itself allowing him his release from service, we should naturally have expected Colonel Wheler to revisit his native land, and, like other Indian officers, realize the usual object of prolonged residence in India, in passing the evening of his toilsome life in honoured repose.

Various causes combined to prevent this. Amongst others, his constitution, so long accustomed to a tropical clime, with his predisposition to chest complaints, would never have borne the rude climate of Britain. The uniformity of that of Bengal suited him best, but even this he was not led to consider his sphere of present duty. A famine, only second in severity to that in which he laboured so nobly during 1837-8, was now desolating that same region, so lately the focus of the Mutiny, and thither, in prosecution of his old work, the "pillar of the cloud" was directing

his course. Taking the railway for part of the way—almost his first and last journey on it, after nearly fifty years' marching at camel pace through the land!—he arrived at Delhi, the centre of the distress. There, as of old, he threw himself into the midst of the scenes where starvation and cholera divided the spoil. Unlike their conduct in 1837, however, the Government, returning good for evil, were doing their duty, and there was no lack of means to relieve the sufferers. The Lieutenant-governor himself was visiting them, and superintending the measures for their aid.

A missionary on the spot thus writes of his visit:—"I saw the good man first of all when he came up to Delhi at the time of the famine, and never can I forget his first words to me. Being secretary of the Famine Relief Fund, I had charge of the orphans, and good Colonel Wheler said, 'I dare say there are other friends who will take from you those children who are good-looking, and sound in body and mind, but I have come up to look after the poor little ones that might be deformed in body and feeble in mind; those whom others might not wish to be troubled with—How many such can you let me have?'

"All such, and there were several, were made over to the good man, with many others, whom he

nursed and taught as kindly and carefully as if they had been his own children.

"While at Delhi, during the famine, he made it a daily practice to go into one of our largest asylums —where some 7000 people daily received bread—to tell them of the 'bread of life,' and I believe he was the means of much good, spiritually as well as temporally, to the starving poor. He contributed largely to our funds, and when I told him he might get so much per head for the support of the orphans he took charge of, he said, 'No, feed others with that, these I will look after with God's help.'"

Thus he soon found about 150 as his own special charge. He was most anxious about girls, whom "lewd fellows of the baser sort" were diligently gathering up for their vile traffic. They even stole some of those he had, which, as well as the fact of the cholera having carried off forty, induced Wheler to accept an offer from Mr. Gregson, the Baptist missionary of Agra, to carry them there. Thither he accordingly went with the orphans on carts, and having made over thirty to the missionaries at Umritsur and Gya, at their earnest request, he settled with the remainder at Chittoura, a native village twelve miles from Agra. He here closed the brief remaining portion of his life in his beloved occupation of training up the young in "the nurture

and admonition of the Lord." And now, as he wrote soon after, he was "made to keep house and become a joyful mother of children." Two letters to a relative thus describe his work and experience at this period:—

"CHITTOURA (*twelve miles from Agra*), *Oct.* 16, 1861.

"MY DEAR ——, —Oh, do we not all require stirring up daily, yea, hourly? No one requires it more than myself. Daily am I lamenting at my short-comings, and daily bathing in the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. This ought not to be. We ought to die and not be dying the death unto sin: and then we should put on true gospel liberty; we should then enter into the holy of holies, and be sanctified body, spirit, and soul, fit vessels for our Master's service. Oh, when will this blessing come? We must, by faith, wait for this great salvation. Justification we have; let us hold fast there and go on to sanctification. We must strive and wrestle in prayer for this stupendous blessing or we shall not obtain it. Obtaining this renders one a saint or one of the holy ones. It strikes me (does it not appear so to you?) that in the Canticles, the Psalms (Av.), and the Revelation there are two classes of believers spoken of— the justified and the sanctified. The former, I believe, will not attain to the first resurrection or reign with

Christ; that is reserved only for the sanctified ones. You are one who aspire to this holy state. Oh, may we both be put even in possession of it to the praise and glory of Him who came to restore us to what Adam lost by the fall.—Yours most affectionately,

"S. G. Heller."

"Delhi, *July 4th*, 1861.

"My dear ——,—I felt it a duty to break up my quiet way of living at Barrackpore and set off at once for these provinces, leaving it to the Lord to protect and take care of me during my exposure to the great heat which I should have to experience. The flesh struggled hard to remain still and be at ease, forming all kinds of excuses; but I asked myself, 'When in the service, would I not at once have obeyed the order of my earthly superior to march to a distant station?' Yes, indeed! The soldiering thinks nothing too hard to perform for an earthly object; in this way the children of this generation often prove wiser than the children of light. I arrived here on the 9th of June, having visited on my journey the American mission at Futtyghur, where you perhaps recollect I was stationed with my regiment in the year 1837-8, when a famine, even more severe than the present one, visited the country. We then had no subscrip-

tions from England, but were left on our own resources, and I had to superintend the giving out of the food, being asked to become secretary of the poor-fund. I then collected about 400 native orphans, and sent them mostly to the missionary institution, and formed an orphanage at Futtyghur, which the American missionaries soon after took off my hands, my regiment being sent to another station, Agra.

"Since I arrived here I have been living with a Baptist Missionary, Mr. Broadway, who takes a lively interest in the work. I have collected about 150 orphans, and intend, with the Lord's permission, to establish an orphanage at this station. These poor orphans, had they not been collected, would have fallen into the hands of the Mussulmans, who would have made slaves of the male orphans and prostitutes of the female orphans; whereas my purpose is, the Lord helping me, to bring them up in the knowledge of the truth, and endeavour to make them useful members of the community.

"Within the last five or six days the Lord has graciously sent us abundance of rain, which has revived the hopes of all; and we may now expect a cessation of the famine altogether. But the judgments of the Lord have not been altogether withheld, for the cholera has appeared among the people

both in the city of Delhi and outside. I am living half a mile outside, and I yesterday lost one orphan by cholera, and two more have died this morning. The people in consequence are becoming very much alarmed, more especially because a comet has just appeared in the heavens; they know not what to think of this, first the sword, then the famine, and now the pestilence. May these indeed move the hearts of the people to fly for refuge to Him who has bled and died on the cross for them. The Lord says to every believer, 'Be still, and know that I am God.' How sweet and encouraging is this! It fills my soul with comfort and peace. I have received your letter of 2nd May, for which many, many thanks.—Ever yours,

"S. G. Wheler."

His belief was that if orphans were sincerely and fully dedicated to God in their training, He would accept it and bless the work to their conversion, so that they would become missionaries to their countrymen. He was not in favour of giving them European habits and education, but rather that they should retain as much as possible their national characteristics, trusting to the power of the truth to separate them from the evil. He was more afraid of the contamination connected with the European

community during their youth and ignorance, and for this reason preferred the isolated village of Chittoura, where, after the first few months, he remained the only European.

Chittoura was a small village of a populous district near the Gwalior frontier, chiefly consisting of the weaver and agricultural castes. Until very lately it had been the scene of great lawlessness and violence. Similarly situated to those border clans amongst whom Bernard Gilpin laboured in Queen Mary's reign, if you substituted "thugs" and "dacoits" (highwaymen) for reiving moss-troopers and cattle-lifters. If one of our runaway ordnance bullocks passed Chittoura his recovery was despaired of, and several were thus lost in 1837–39.

When Wheler and his Agra brethren established the local missionary society in 1838–39, for carrying the gospel to the villages around Agra by native evangelists, Chittoura was one of the places thus visited, where the truth seemed to be specially welcomed, and which had shown signs of profiting. Mr. Williams, the Baptist missionary of Agra, and the only one there at that time, had founded a little community of converts, and in 1846 the Rev. James Smith, now of Delhi, had settled there, revived the smouldering fire, and given a fresh impetus to evangelization in the locality. A little Christian

village, with a factory of Scotch looms and other appliances of civilization and religion, had turned this region of robbery into a favourite country resort for change of air by friends of the cause in Agra; and just when the desert was beginning to "blossom like the rose," and the young church was leavening the neighbourhood by means of its indigenous evangelists, the removal of Mr. Smith and other chief leaders, followed soon after by the Mutiny, threw back the cause of Christianity and appeared to have extinguished the work.

Some of the old missionary buildings still existed

> "Where once a garden smiled,
> And still where many a garden-flower grew wild."

Here it was that Wheler took shelter with his little ones, and once more an altar was erected to the Lord, and another day of gospel grace dawned on the poor heathen. Not only were the means of grace, as a light in darkness, provided daily amongst the orphans, but Wheler, with a native evangelist the missionaries had given him to assist his labours, also preached daily in the villages around, though for the time without apparent effect or any fruit. At first, until his strength and health failed him, he rode weekly into Agra to hold religious service with the soldiers of Her Majesty's regiments stationed there.

He mentions the great refreshment he received from these meetings with the soldiers, and was much attached to barrack work still, in remembrance of the triumphs of grace he had formerly seen in it; and of one regiment particularly he said that "he went to learn, not to teach," so manifestly was the power of God in their midst, and such deep spirituality and solemnity was in their prayers. This regiment had previously been stationed in the jungles of Oude, and there, as is not unfrequently the case in India, cut off from ordinary means of grace, without a building for worship or a chaplain, the Spirit had been poured out among them, and through a gracious revival many souls had been saved; and the converts still continued steadfastly "in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers, and the Lord added to the church daily."

Describing the way in which they were keeping up their meetings in 1863, Colonel Wheler writes, "There are some truly practical and able men amongst them, who go about the barracks and hospitals distributing tracts, etc. Two of them have been instrumental in opening a Bible-class amongst the artillery located in the fort. Last week this commenced, and nineteen artillerymen attended. It is to be kept up every night."

With several of the good men in the army he kept up correspondence, and very touching are the expressions of gratitude to him as the instrument of their conversion. Many are doubtless holding on their way, and form the salt of the British army: to such this imperfect memorial of their beloved friend will not be uninteresting.

He was now to prove how "they that water others shall be watered also themselves." Although but sixty-three years of age, Wheler, by his incessant labour, had in reality attained that period of life which is "labour and sorrow, so soon passeth it away and it is gone." He was fast failing, worn out, in fact, "in labours above measure," and it only remained for the Master to add the finishing touch and the work was completed. Wheler probably found himself unequal to the undertaking he had proposed to himself, no less than the building up a Christian community of his own converts and on his own principles. Alluding to some call to other work, and his sense of the responsibility already on him, he writes, in 1863, "I cannot take on myself the responsibility of leaving my charge at this place, being now the only person here, without doing apparent injury to the orphans whom I am, in a manner, bound to bring up 'in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,' besides other important

duties both here and in Agra. . . . . They are like young tender twigs which require the sap of life every day; miss one day, and, like the branch, they begin to wither."

He seemed to have had plans of improvement on the past measures employed in training orphans, gathered from his former experience and that of others. But it may still be a question whether his gift was not rather to evangelize, like Whitefield, than to organize, like Wesley. "It was well that it was in his heart," but the Lord had other designs regarding him, whereby, his faith being strengthened, he should be enabled to leave all his plans and operations in the Lord's hands, and believing that "his works would follow him, rest from his labours."

When the orphanage was well established, and some impression appeared to be made on the children, if not also on the population around, Wheler was laid aside by a severe illness in January 1864, partly in consequence of neglected ailments during the previous year. He was carried into Agra to Mr. Gregson's house, and his life despaired of by all about him, his weakness being so extreme he could not lift his head to feed himself. Mr. Gregson writes on the 5th of January:—

"I regret much to have to inform you that poor

dear Colonel Wheler is now under my roof, and so ill that we have no hope of his recovery. He has been suffering much all the last year. I have again and again personally and by letter entreated him to come into Agra. At length he became so weak that we feared he would not be able to come in at all. He wrote for a palkee and I sent one out and he came in on the 1st inst. I sent at once for the doctor, and we have endeavoured to do all we can for him, but he has grown weaker and weaker, and is now not able to lift up his head. We feed him when possible every few minutes, but he takes so very little at a time his strength must fail, and at this rate he cannot go on long. What grieves me most is his state of mind. When he first came he was so full of confidence in God, and could not praise Him enough for his mercies; but on Sunday he was very low-spirited. Some things of his past life troubled him much: he thought he had acted in a hasty, uncharitable manner, and feared there was no forgiveness for him. When I told him I intended to write to you, and asked him if he had any message for you, 'Tell him,' he said, 'I die a guilty, miserable sinner.' He said, when I asked him, that he could not say he was altogether without hope.

"On Sunday, when I said, 'Shall I pray with you?' he said, 'It is of no use.' But I did pray, and he said

as I finished, 'I wish I could join in that prayer.' Yesterday he asked me to pray with him, and did say most heartily, 'Amen,' as I finished, and a second time when I prayed with him he said the same. He was weak and distracted with powerful medicines. But his religion did not seem to be of a cheerful type; he appears to have set before himself a standard of unattainable perfection, and to have had almost morbid views of his own deficiencies. He wished perfection, and seemed almost to think that it was necessary as an evidence of being God's child. The fatherly, gentle, and loving character of God had not been sufficiently dwelt upon and understood in his theology. But he is a good man, and God will receive him. As to the orphans I believe he leaves them entirely to me with a sum of 12,000 Company's Rs. in the bank for their use. His accounts are all in most perfect order, and he has explained his affairs to me. Would you please communicate with his friends in England.—In haste, I remain, yours affectionately, "J. GREGSON."

"*January 7th.*"

"We have done all we could for him, and I think I may say he could not have been more affectionately or tenderly nursed had he been surrounded by children of his own."

Little were Wheler's friends prepared to hear of such unprecedented experience befalling him; they were also undergoing exercises of soul regarding their missionary friends, from the recent violent deaths of two of them in India,* and during that week some very solemn prayer-meetings had been held in Inverness on occasion of the "annual week of prayer," Colonel Wheler with other labourers in India being specially remembered, although we had no idea that he was at all unwell. Mr. Gregson concludes with a postscript of two days later date.

"*January 9th.*—Two days ago the Colonel was so ill we thought it impossible he should live till morning, but wonderful to say, he rallied, and as I now write he is considerably better. The doctor gives no hopes of ultimate recovery; he is in a much more happy state of mind. I administered to him the communion."

Shortly after a letter arrived from himself describing the wonderful and unexpected restoration that he had experienced. Concerning the darkness of mind he passed through at this period he writes: "There is a passage in Madame Guion's memoir which speaks very much what I experienced during my late illness—page 324, on the subject of faith; do read it. I experienced that darkness and dis-

* Revs. L. Janvier, at Loodiana, and — [illegible]enthal, at Peshawur.

comfort which she speaks of, in the early part of my illness."

We give the passage from Mr. Upham's edition.

"In regard to the principle of *faith*, I will farther say that it sometimes lies as it were latent, and concealed in the midst of discomfort and sorrow. I recollect that in the former periods of my experience, I once spent a considerable time in a state of depression and deep sorrow because I supposed I had lost God, or at least had lost his favour. My grief was great and without cessation. If I had seen things as I now see them, and had understood them then as I now understand them, I should have found a principle of restoration and of comfort in the very grief which overwhelmed me. How could I thus have mourned the loss of God's presence, or rather what seemed to me to be such a loss if I did not love Him? and how could I love Him without faith in Him? In my sorrow, therefore, I might have found the evidence of my faith. And it is a great truth that in *reality*, whatever may at times be the appearance, God never does desert and never can desert those who believe."

Those months had been seasons of solemn spiritual experience. He had passed through deep waters. "The deep waters had gone over his soul,"

and for the first time since his conversion in 1831-2 "his hope was lost."

Doubtless this depression was partly from physical causes, but still more from spiritual exercise of soul which few are strangers to, who, in their entire self-sacrifice obtain close conformity to Jesus, and attain to "know Him, and the fellowship of his sufferings," inseparable as such experience is from conflicts with Satan, who never fails, like Amalek, to take advantage of our times of weakness "to smite the hindermost, even all, that are feeble behind us, when they are faint and weary." Wheler mentions his deep obligation to one or two of the soldiers, amongst others, who nursed him with such mother-like tenderness, saying that their simple prayers and godly conversations had given him inexpressible delight. Humanly speaking, it was to Mr. Gregson's presence and great influence with his friend, and the tender care he experienced under his roof, that we must ascribe Wheler's remarkable recovery, and rising as though from the grave, as well as his deliverance from the painful darkness of mind experienced during his sickness. Thus in the place where he had struck the rock and made the water of life to flow, he that had so often watered others was watered also himself.

With his deep yearning for the souls of his

charge he could not be kept away from them longer than he was absolutely compelled, and in a month or so he was back at Chittoura, and like the choice steel that has undergone the various processes which qualify it for a die to stamp the precious ore, he returned to stamp their young hearts with the image of Christ. His first communication after his return to Chittoura shows the blessed result of his own late trials, how "the God of all comfort had comforted him in all his tribulation, that he might be able to comfort them which are in any trouble with the comfort wherewith he himself was comforted of God." Thus was he able, all alone as he was, to bring these children of wrath, rescued out of the very focus of the Mutiny and the unexampled horrors of heathenism in its dying agonies, to realize the most blessed experience of the heavenly life, "beggars from the dunghill to be set amongst princes," and made to "inherit the throne of glory," for "the pillars of the earth are the Lord's." He writes on his return:—

"CHITTOURA, 20th *May*, 1864.

"Grace and peace with you and all who love the Lord Jesus. Your kind and comforting letter of the first of April has come to hand, and I need not say that I feel deeply grateful for your and other Christian friends' sympathizing expressions. . . . Others

with whom I used to associate in bygone times you have brought to my remembrance in a way I shall not easily forget. We shall all meet, I trust, at the right hand of our Saviour 'in that day,' and receive the crown of life. You seem to regret I have not determined on residing at Agra. I grant you it would be very desirable to do so, were it not for the temptations the orphans would be exposed to. The girls are now advancing into womanhood, and therefore require much watchfulness and attention, and though it costs me some self-denial in remaining here, yet I feel myself more bound to them than ever from the circumstance of my lately observing a nice spirit of prayer pervading them. They almost all pray extempore when called upon to do so. I have regular prayer-meetings three times during the week; one for the few Christians who remain here, when the orphans also attend and join in prayer, and twice at my own house for the orphans alone. The girls as well as the boys pray on these occasions, both at the chapel and at my house. It is very touching sometimes to hear them confessing their sins. They seem to delight in this duty more than in their lessons, having asked me to devote some morning to prayer instead of to the latter; and I must say I feel far more refreshed myself after our prayer-meetings than any other services. I

look forward to the time when the Lord will make me a 'joyful father of children.' When I first took charge of the orphans it was as if I had been placed in a parcel of land covered with jungle, and which I was expected, through God's grace, to turn into a garden. Oh, I hope God will permit me to see them all become trees of righteousness, bearing fruit to the honour and praise of the Lord. . . . . You will be deeply grieved to hear of the murder of your friend the Rev. Mr. Lowenthal,* at Peshawur; you have no doubt ere this had all the particulars. Though seemingly a severe loss in our short-sighted view, yet we may be sure all will turn out for the glory of God. He proved himself a faithful steward of the Lord, and no doubt was ready to depart at the sudden summons given him. The mission will not readily find one to replace him, with the knowledge and experience he possessed. . . . . I am doing very well in health of body, I am thankful to say, though not near so strong as formerly. I have not crossed my horse since my illness, but hope to do so, D.V., to-morrow morning. I have hitherto taken an airing in a buggy. Again I thank you for all the nice books and tracts you send me. The tracts and periodicals I send to a young soldier,

* Of the American Presbyterian Mission, Peshawur, shot in his own garden at night by his watchman.

whom I was the happy means of converting when at Barrackpore. He has continued steadfast, though often like a lamb amongst wolves.

"Give my kindest remembrances to all my old Indian friends whom you may meet.—Ever yours very affectionately, "S. G. WHELER."

Colonel Wheler had his peculiarities, as most men would regard them. When a sickness broke out amongst the orphans, he did not send for any medical man, nor use other means than special prayer for their recovery. He mentioned that on one occasion several of the children had been confined to bed, and for several days unable to [illegible] anything; the female in charge entreated him to send to Agra for a medical man, but he persevered in trusting alone to prayer, and having previously summoned all the institution to special humiliation, etc., to cast the matter on the Lord, he said he would not dishonour Him by doubting of an answer, and seeking help from other quarters. At the conclusion of a special meeting for intercession in behalf of the sick ones, the girls who had been left in bed were found up and dressed, and quite restored to health. He mentioned that the memoir of Dorothea Trüdel*

* "DOROTHEA TRÜDEL; or, the Prayer of Faith. With some particulars of the remarkable manner in which the sick were raised up in answer to special prayer." London: Morgan and Chase.

was quite to his mind, and had greatly pleased him by "showing how the Lord is ready to answer the prayer of faith to those who trust in Him." It is not thought that in his own frequent ailments he ever voluntarily "sought unto the physicians," although he did not depreciate the medical profession in any way, or regard it otherwise than as one of God's gracious gifts.

Just before his illness in January, 1864, alluding to the proposition of his going to the hills for change of air, he said, "No; the Lord has enabled me hitherto to stem all weathers in which his providence has placed me; therefore the best plan I think is to walk by faith in this respect, casting all my care upon Him. That is a comprehensive saying, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you.' Health of body is included in the promise as much as anything else, if we have faith to believe it. I was put to the test last cold weather, when laid up with a serious attack of ague and fever; I had no medical man to attend me, but by prayer the Lord had mercy on me, and healed me."

Yes! "all other things," is indeed "comprehensive," not merely embracing prolongation of days on earth, but "length of days for ever and

ever," "an abundant entrance into the kingdom of heaven." Having "seen the salvation of God" in a blessed awakening amongst his orphans, during which several were converted, he was beginning to say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." He thus describes this blessed work of grace a few months before his death:—

"*June* 19, 1864.

"Grace, mercy, and love be with you abundantly. Your letter written in April last informed me of your rejoicing and returning thanks to God publicly on my behalf and the orphans. I feel I cannot sufficiently thank you . . . . and others for such an act of kindness towards unworthy me and my charge. The Lord, I trust, is blessing your prayers in behalf of the orphans; for besides the spirit of prayer which pervades them, at least a great part of them, it is delightful to witness the zeal and missionary spirit which animate several of the elder boys. Three or four of them go out every day to the villages in the neighbourhood, with the catechist located by the Baptist Society at this place; they are quite vexed and disappointed if prevented in doing so.

"Last Sunday, Mr. Gregson came over at my request, and baptized twelve of them, seven boys and five girls; and I hope in a few months more,

the Lord willing, we shall have as many more to receive baptism. We keep up our prayer-meetings, as I mentioned in my last. They have much improved in this duty. We do not forget you and other kind friends when we meet together. One dear girl, the day after she was baptized, said in her prayer, 'Lord, from henceforth thou shalt be my husband; I will have none other but Thee.' Another (a boy) said, 'Lord, give me a heart to feel grieved, for my sins, which I hope are all laid on the head of Jesus;' another, 'Lord, give me grace henceforth to despise the riches of this world, the Lord Jesus being my true riches;' and such-like expressions are poured forth in their simple prayers. There are some 'budzats' (rascals) amongst them, who persecute those who are decided for the Lord. This is what we must expect; the devil will never be quiet when the Lord's work is successfully progressing. It all, however, works for good, as it more clearly demonstrates who are the true and who the false, and for whom we should more especially pray.

"Your letter of the 9th of May has just come to hand; you ask whether any depôts for religious books, tracts, etc., are established, as formerly, in the North-western Provinces. Yes, there is a good number of the Bible and Tract Societies located at

Allahabad, and which has its branches at other large stations. Mr. Gregson, at Agra, is in charge of a branch depository, and sells a large quantity, especially to the soldiers, who distribute a good number among their comrades. My journey to Agra and back is beyond my strength just now; it was as much as I could do to get through a short service this morning at the chapel. Mr. Gregson has recommended my taking cod-liver oil, as I have much debility, especially in the early part of the day; a little thing knocks me up. The heat just now is very great; the thermometer in my sitting-room is at 94°.—Very affectionately yours,

"S. G. Wheler."

Thus it appears that, though frail in body and evidently approaching the rest from his labours, he had no serious sickness, but continued vigorous in mind and soul to the last.

"He'd wrestled on towards heaven
'Gainst storm, and wind, and tide.
Now, like a weary traveller
That leaneth on his guide,
Amid the shades of evening,
Whilst sinks life's lingering sand,
He hailed the glory dawning
From Immanuel's land."

CHAPTER X.

He thus wrote on the 21st of April, 1865, a fortnight before his death, an event apparently hardly expected by him even then, engaged as he was in the absorbing occupation which engrossed his attention to the end :—

"Chittoura, *April* 21, 1865.

"Every blessing attend you and the Lord's work in which you are engaged; may many souls indeed be given you for your hire. Though the Enemy were coming in like a flood upon you, it is then that the Lord more especially stretches out his hand to deliver and encourage us to go on and prosper. You will doubtless see more yet of the good that is to follow, and, like Jonathan, unexpectedly attack the enemy, and find yourself wonderfully helped of the Lord, and carry all before you. It is very cheering to read your account, together with the animated accounts which appear every month in *The Revival*. The out-door preaching, and that too at the most public resorts of the people, such as fairs, races, public executions, etc., must, with the Lord's blessing, bring the

word to the ears of every class of people, and lead many to consider their ways and give their heart to the Lord.

"I did not see your 'Appeal' respecting the collecting of orphans who might be left destitute from the effects of the late dreadful cyclone. . . . . I have written to —— to inquire what he is doing in it, and told him I will receive any female orphans he can collect, if no institution in Calcutta is opened for their reception. I told him I thought the latter arrangement the most feasible, as the orphans in coming up here would have to be taught a different language, the Bengali not being known here, which would be a great drawback. If some kind Christian lady could be found, like Mrs. Wilson,* who would take charge of them in Calcutta or its neighbourhood, it would be more satisfactory. Surely there must be some Christian lady who would come forward were the subject proposed.

"Mr. Gregson brought —— over here a few days ago. He is come out under the auspices of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in order to set on foot a regular system of colportage throughout this part of the country. He had not met with any success hitherto, in consequence of the difficulty of meeting with men adapted for such a work.

* Of Agurpara, 1852—54.

None of the missionaries could afford to part with any of their catechists or men of such a stamp, there being a great demand for them. . . . . I have nothing to remark about the orphans. There are many ups and downs, but I do trust the work in the heart is steadily progressing, and that the Lord will soon send us a shower, and revive every heart.

"Thank you for ——'s letter, which you sent me in your last. I had not heard of him for some years: the last time I conversed with him I recollect him saying, 'I wish, Wheler, I was as independent as you, for you can lay out all your money in the Lord's work, whereas the support and education of my family leave me nothing to spare.' This remark of his struck me very forcibly of what is written in 1 Cor. vii. 33. Pray remember me most kindly to ——, and ——, and any other Indian friends.

"Remember me in your prayers. With kindest love, yours affectionately,

"S. G. WHELER."

Five days before his death, Mr. Gregson, having heard of his failing strength, though not anticipating anything serious, had written to him, pressing his return to Agra; to which he replied by the following, which were the last words he penned:—

"DEAR MR. G——,—I thank you heartily for your kindness, but, from the first commencement of the illness, I determined to commit the matter into the Lord's hands. I therefore feel it my duty to remain here, and trust in Him who says, 'Cast all your care upon Me,' and be 'quiet from fear of evil.' With love.—Yours respectfully,

"S. G. WHELER."

Had Mr. Gregson received these feebly-written lines in time, he would have gone to Chittoura; but being absent in the district, and various circumstances delaying him, he next heard of his friend's death. The elder orphans and native Christians state that he died very peacefully. They wanted to convey intelligence of his illness to Agra, but he would not allow them, and spent much of his time in silent prayer. As John Bunyan has it of Mr. Standfast at his departure over the river, "Now, while he was thus in discourse his countenance changed, his strong man bowed under him, and after he had said, 'Take me, for I come to Thee,' he ceased to be seen of them."

"Thus when the shades of evening fall and death itself draws nigh,
If Jesus shines upon the soul, how sweet it is to die!"

He had made over the orphans (eleven girls and

thirty-one boys) to the Baptist Mission—his earliest friends in Agra—who have engaged to fulfil his desires on their behalf, and have for this purpose removed them into the station of Agra, that they may be under their supervision and within reach of the various religious privileges afforded there.

Wheler was interred in the Agra Cemetery; a plain tomb gives his name and age. His memorial is in the hearts of the Indian Church, and his record on high.

One who visited him. shortly before his death, thus describes his impression, in the pages of the *Bombay Guardian* :—

"He had settled shortly before at Chittoura, surrounded by his orphans, to whose training he had devoted his later years. The volunteer corps in our Indian Mission is small, and he was one of the most prominent of the corps, so that we cannot but pay this mournful tribute to his memory. He had been a missionary, we believe, long before he left the service; and many of our readers will remember the strictures which were freely passed on him, because he would not give up preaching to the natives whenever opportunity afforded. During the last three or four years he entirely devoted himself and his property to the training of a number of

orphans gathered in the last famine at Delhi. It was his opinion that as England has conquered India by a well-trained native army, so in a spiritual sense missionaries can only accomplish the conquest of Hindostan, by training up an army of soldiers of Christ. This was no easy task, much less so than creating a native army. His patience and perseverance were not in vain however, and he lived to see several of his bigger boys begin their work of imparting the gospel to their countrymen. When we saw him last, about six months ago, these boys had just returned from a preaching tour to a 'mela' (a fair), and had returned every pice they had saved from the money received for their sustenance, and which might all easily have been used up. 'Yet these very boys,' he added, 'when they first came to me, used to break open my boxes and steal whatever they could lay their hands on.'

"He was then no more the bold upright soldier he had been, but bent, and his voice weak; for his health had not been good for the last two years, and he was so forgetful of himself that he scarcely noticed it. He was a man to whom a young missionary might look up with deep admiration, as a pattern of devotion and self-denial. Such heroism is needed to be admired, for it is scarce. He had no ambition, for ambition's

idol is self. We justly mourn for the removal from our midst of one who counted earthly riches and honour and ease as loss for Christ; but great and honoured will he be, and brightly will his star shine, when all honour and glory bestowed on the world's heroes shall have faded away for ever. Would that we could inherit a measure of that spirit and heroism which lived in him."

Thus did one of the public prints bear testimony to his worth. The Indian Church might justly be proud of him as a production of native growth.

Yes, and "his works do follow him." We have wrongly estimated the natives if even *their* character has not been moulded by the Christian fidelity and moral heroism witnessed in Colonel Wheler, and those of like mind amongst the other pious European officers. In every station he proclaimed the gospel, and from Calcutta round about unto Peshawur he had "fully preached the gospel of Christ," leaving permanent results either in missions subsequently established, or in a revival of existing ones.

Whatever has been the change of times and manners in the India of 1866 compared with those of Wheler's first experience in the country, his

manly zeal in communicating Christian truth to all around, without distinction of class or race, must ever be a desirable trait, and one of the chief factors in that great problem of our countrymen's influence over the natives. No man can henceforth hope to attain eminence in India who is indifferent to the religious prospects of the country, and the conversion of the natives to Christianity. We may speak of Wheler in some such words as one of India's great men has recorded of James Thomason's career, "No governor can henceforth come short of the standard he left us."

We do not claim for Wheler a niche in St. Paul's. Nor do we ask for him to be named in connection with the Broadfoots, Nicholsons, Lawrences, and Havelocks, nor among those "lesser fires" in military renown whose deeds have added such lustre to our Indian history. He was a conscientious commander, diligent and attentive to his duty, and his strong native sense and experience in his profession compelled the respect of the Sepoys even under the most trying circumstances. If some have surpassed him in zeal and devotedness to regimental duties, we must bear in mind the extreme ungodliness which abounded around him in his early life, and which drew off much of his time and attention, in a degree that would hardly be justifiable in

these "times of reformation." It was the greatness of the occasion, rather than any innate qualities of superiority, which has made his career so valuable and interesting to succeeding generations.

We do not cut down hedges with a razor, and a hammer is preferable to a plane for dressing granite. Wheler's work was of the roughest kind; he stood the test, and bore the brunt of the battle. A man is not particular what weapon he selects when driving out intruders from his garden. "The heathen had come into God's inheritance, his holy place had they defiled;" "the boar out of the forest did waste it, the wild beast of the field did devour it." In fighting with beasts at Ephesus, one might well become oblivious sometimes to matters of personal adornment. Even Sir Charles Napier's toilet was rather scant, yet his fame never suffered thereby. "They that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses." That Wheler served his generation by the will of God was questioned by none of the thirteen or fourteen commanders-in-chief during his time of service. *He never had a word of difference with one of them.* Whatever may have been his occasional collisions with the *political* authorities, *his own superiors in the army ever held him in respect,* and whenever the interests of the service or other causes required his removal to other regiments, they

were in the habit of consulting his wishes first; and on one occasion he was requested as a special favour to take charge of a regiment which was manifesting insubordination, which he accordingly did, and with the most complete success.

Under the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed, and the ordeal through which he was called to pass, Wheler may be held up as a model Christian soldier, and one whose whole career was a success, and worthy to be had in honour by the Indian army,

> "Blest Saviour, introduced by Thee,
> I have my course begun,
> And crowned with victory, at thy feet
> I lay my honours down."

As regards his principle of living by faith, it seems to have proved abundantly fruitful in his experience, for even after the loss of his hitherto large income of £1200 a year, and when his allowance was reduced to £300 a year, "the cruse of oil" never failed. With the responsibility of the orphanage in addition, he thus writes in June, 1864:—

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Why send me so much money? I do not want it. The Lord has given me plenty. Most hearty thanks to you for it, nevertheless; but do not send any more."

And on other occasions he also wrote to the same purport. He was still enabled to continue his liberal donations to the poor in London. So late as April 13th, 1865, No. 299 of *The Revival* (a periodical much prized by Wheler) contains an acknowledgment of £50, remitted by him for different charitable objects; and in *The Revival* of May 25th, 1865, (No. 305) we have particulars of the manner in which another remittance of £100 was divided. Nearly a fortnight before the draft for the last-mentioned sum of £100 had reached the English shore, the spirit of the beloved donor had winged its way to the presence of Him whom he had so long loved and so faithfully served. We believe his example has opened a spring of liberality which will continue to flow in ever-increasing abundance, so that from India's mighty streams of wealth, a canal of benevolence has been diverted which will water the waste places both there and here.

Oblivious as he was of personal adornment, and opposed to worldly society, whereby those prejudiced against him took occasion to reproach religion as tending to asceticism and want of *esprit de corps*, Wheler was, nevertheless, rather favoured by nature in his personal appearance. Over six feet in height, but of admirable proportions, of athletic though spare frame, he possessed a noble bearing,

especially when mounted on parade. He might have been a very idol of the Sepoys for bodily grace and physical accomplishments, and have given an admirable illustration of the muscular type of Christianity. Probably few officers in India could have surpassed him in bodily grace and military appearance, had he studied to shine in such matters; but he held them in the faintest estimation, bordering on contempt. His severe gravity of countenance added to the dignity of his general appearance, and the portrait given in the "Life of Sir Thomas Munro," conveys some idea of Wheler's expression, except that in his case the countenance was frequently lit up with a most winning expression, and a smile that seemed irresistible played about his mouth. Not unfrequently when surrounded by crowds of excited heathens, and with his spirit roused by their frantic uproar and opposition, one saw "his face as it had been the face of an angel," seeming to inspire the beholders with almost supernatural feelings.

Through his frequent bodily ailments, severe labours, and self-denial, aggravated by the trials and persecutions he passed through in his latter days, he seems to have failed much in outward appearance and general strength, until strangers who saw him then for the first time might say his

"bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible. In other respects he was remarkable to the last for his regularity of habits, cleanliness, and neatness of person, and scrupulous nicety in all his household accounts, as he had ever been in the routine of his regimental duties, showing how easily he might in other and more favoured circumstances have shone as an officer of the household brigade and in park reviews, as he did in the toilsome drudgery of a Sepoy commander.

We may sum up this side of his character in the words of one who was well acquainted with him, and himself an Indian officer of no mean repute and experience:—

"Anent Wheler, I did love him greatly; but I fear you and I, and perhaps others, were more the cause of his getting into trouble, than the Government or worldly enemies, for many were in danger of thinking too well of him. I remember General —— at —— was struck by Wheler, and being friendly with me used to speak of him. Knowing how highly I thought of him, one morning when I walked over to have a chat, he said to me, 'I've something to say that will grieve you sadly—Wheler's regiment has mutinied at Ferozepore.' I felt stunned, for I had made up a little matter on my own account, and used to muse thus:

Only let Wheler's regiment go into action, and it will be seen how God honours him; and I am even drawn perhaps the more into this savouring of the world—this 'be it far from thee'—by hearing the officers applaud Wheler's courage. You know he was a good horseman, and when the regiment was crossing the Ganges at Gurmuktesur Ghaut, the officers' horses had to be got into undecked boats. This was a difficult job, and Wheler's horse refused altogether, when to the astonishment of the officers he jumped on him and leapt him into the boat—a hazardous feat, for which he was greatly applauded.

"In saying, 'Wheler was a very great saint with a few big mistakes,' I alluded first to his views about perfection, a figment that had got hold of his mind when I last saw him in Barrackpore. . . . I think this view was fostered by his other mistake, which was want of devotion to his military duty. He took the Government pay, but did not give an equivalent. He was the bravest man in the Bengal army through his wondrous faith, but he lacked zeal for the service. Any Christian ought so to act and labour that an earthly master will speak well of him. We must in this respect 'have a good report of them that are without,' but it was not so with him. . . . . Therefore I again say we most of us go to heaven with a big mistake or two, and perhaps

Dear Wheler was left to himself in these two points that I was, and I and others should not think of him too highly.

"Dear Wheler's devotion to Jesus was wonderful: his eye was so single that his whole body was full of light, and he worked hard for his Master. There was nothing speculative, sentimental, or metaphysical about his faith; it was from the royal mint, and bore the superscription, 'worketh by love.' Then again there was an evenness about his spirit that had at last imprinted his character on his features. He was one of the 'shining ones.'"

Macleod Wylie, late a judge of the Calcutta bench, thus speaks of him:—

"Certainly he was an eminently holy man. The early part of 1 Thess. ii. seems to represent his course. What a glorious waking up his must have been! He, and ——, and ——, were, I think, the three noblest saints I knew in India; but that is saying much, for I knew also ——, and ——, and ——, and ——. Their memory is very precious.

"He gave away all his income except what was necessary for his simple wants. He used at one time to send me a great deal to be given away under the name of 'A Friend.' I think a large part went to the European Orphan Asylum; much also

went to various missions, at that time es
the Church Missionary Society. He desired
and thought I had done wrong in giving away some
as from 'A Friend at Peshawur.' When Dr.
Hæberlin established a mission in Eastern Bengal,
he was, while it lasted, its chief support. Five
hundred Whelers would have saved India.'"

And in a subsequent letter Mr. Wylie further writes:—

PAU, *October* 1, 1866.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I rejoice to hear that your Memoir of our beloved friend, General Wheler, is about to appear, and I heartily wish that I had been in England, and well enough, to assist you (as you desired) in compiling it.

"In reflecting on old Indian days the memoir recals many most dear and faithful friends who are now 'without fault before the throne of God;' men of different churches, different nations, different characters and habits of mind, but men of faith, and love, and prayer, who served their generation according to the will of God. Among these I can think of no one whom I honoured more than dear old Stephen Wheler. At one time I used to hear from him frequently, and he used to send me down a considerable part of his pay for various objects of charity. At that date his chief concern was for the

poor. He had been a good deal disappointed with some aspects of missionary work, and especially felt a strong repugnance to the system of raising funds by the publication of constant reports, by public meetings, etc.; and he feared that these things had an evil influence on the missionaries themselves, and on the friends of missions. He was therefore led to devote himself more particularly to the suffering members of Christ's body, and nearly his whole income was spent upon them, till he finally gave himself up entirely to the charge of the orphans among whom at last he died.

"I thought at the time, and think still, that the books he was almost exclusively reading at that period (the memoirs of some Wesleyans who believed that they had received the grace of perfection) had an unfortunate effect on his mind. Not that he ever fancied that he was equal to them. But the result was unfortunate, because he regarded too much his own shortcomings, and the shortcomings of others, as compared with those human standards of excellence, and failed to apprehend sufficiently our perfection and completeness in Christ.

"I venture to say this of this dear friend, because I think it throws light on a certain portion of his life. At the same time I felt then, as I feel now, that he was one of the most holy, humble, and

devoted men I ever met or heard of, and that it would be well for me if I followed him a[illegible] followed the Saviour.

"One thing more I must mention as characteristic of this man of God: I mean his silence about his own doings. I have reason to believe that his labours among the heathen were remarkably blessed; but it was seldom that he spoke, even to his dearest friends, on the subject. In one case, I believe that an Afghan, to whom he was blessed, went back into his own country to proclaim the gospel, knowing that death certainly awaited him.

"Oh that in the Indian army, among our beloved friends or kindred there, and not in the army only, but among all the Europeans in that land, there might be raised up many like this faithful, noble, humble saint, to spend and be spent as he was!

"Believe me, affectionately yours,

"MACLEOD WYLIE."

Thus have we brought to a close our record of nearly fifty years' continuous service of a Sepoy officer during that remarkable period in which, chiefly through the agency of the army of which Wheler was a humble member, a new empire, under

a Christian Government, was established in India. During the period between 1815 and 1865, Burmah, China, Afghanistan, Bhurtpore, Scinde, Gwalior, Persia, and the Punjab, were subdued; besides numerous states being annexed, and the great Mutiny extinguished. He saw Christianity, outwardly at least, established throughout the Eastern Empire, and the light of the gospel restored in Asia after its millennium of eclipse; and if every link of the odious connection of the Government with the false religions of the country was not entirely severed, at least the outward homage once paid to them had come to an end, as had also that open ungodliness of our countrymen "glorying in their shame" become veiled under the proprieties of civilized life. He saw missionaries following in his steps and reaping where he had sown. He lived to see the cessation of the scandal of a professedly Christian Government persecuting its own officers for carrying out the precepts of the gospel, and himself, a victim for righteousness' sake, no insignificant agent in bringing about the new policy whereby Christianity was openly confessed as the maxim of the State, and as pervading the conduct of its rulers. Yes! he not only lived down the disgraceful panic that made the conversion of Sepoys to Christianity a bugbear to the authorities, but was spared to see the

consummation of his life-work in the gathering of a Christian church amongst the Sepoys of a [illegible] native regiment, and men in high position giving the weight of their presence and example at its inauguration.

Time would fail to tell of all the difference in the India of 1815 and that of 1865, during the career of one individual, not the least striking item of which is the comparison between the native Bengal military force when Wheler first joined his regiment, and when he left it as "the reformed army." The fearful nightmare ever pressing on the breast of society had been dissipated like a dream of the night. Answered "by terrible things in righteousness," we have learnt how to govern the country by natives, God showing us "the power of his works, that He may give us the heritage of the heathen;" and as we know more and more the indispensableness of a native army if we are to govern as well as conquer India, so by the life-lesson of the subject of this memoir may we learn how that native army may be preserved loyal and efficient, and again, as in days of yore, distinguished.

Yes, from being harried and universally shunned "as a mad dog" by society, Wheler survived to see the civil and military services, the twin aristocracies of the East, no longer ashamed of their religion, but

ing their birthright as Britons to testify their
f in it, and to invite *all*, whether European
native, to share in its salvation; until at last
that mighty power, public opinion, demanded and
obtained, as Viceroy of the new-born empire, a
man whose name was a guarantee for liberty of
conscience and freedom of Christian action, one
whose past history had marked him as the Mordecai
of Hindostan.

If we do not yet see in conversions the matured
fruits of such a life's labour as General Wheler's, we
may perhaps remember that his own character was
the gradual growth of years; and without disparage-
ment to the numerous and even more distinguished
men, through whose piety and talents India is being
regenerated, we may certainly anticipate that his
labours have not been in vain, and that of the
numerous promising men already walking in his
steps, it will yet be said, "The spirit of Elijah doth
rest on Elisha;" as an earnest of that future when
"instead of the fathers shall be the children whom
Thou shalt make princes in all lands."

We cannot more becomingly take leave of our
labour of love towards an old and very dear friend,
than by an extract—with the alteration of a word
or so—from the lines written by Mrs. Sigourney

to the memory of Mrs. Miron Winslow, of the Ceylon Mission,

"But now thy bed
Is with thy infant train, where the sad voice
Of the young Indian mother tells her child
Of all thy prayers and labours. Yes, thy rest
Is in the bosom of that fertile land,
Where heathen man with lavish nature strives
To blot the lesson she would teach of God.
Thy pensive brethren pause upon thy tomb
To catch the spirit that did bear thee through
All tribulation, till thy robes were white,
To join the angelic train.
. . . . And so farewell,
My manhood's comrade and my sainted friend,
Whose bright example, not [illegible]t rebuke,
Admonisheth that home, [illegible] wealth,
And native land, are well [illegible] for heaven."

THE END.

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